THE CULTURE OF COURAGE

VOLUME II

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Volume Seven.

Culture of Courage

VOLUME II.

By Frank Channing Haddock, M.S., Ph.D.

Author of "Power for Success," "Power of Will," "Practical Psychology," "Business Power," "Creative Personality."

Advanced Courage Studies Dealing with Phases of Superstition and Religion.

"Nothing can come to us from any unseen intelligence save through the channels of our own thinking."

Fifth Thousand

1919

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NEW YORK

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

When the first edition of "CULTURE OF COURAGE" appeared a few years ago, it was a big, bulky book of 650 pages. Not only was it cumbersome to handle, but it really embraced two distinct volumes in the study of courage-power.

Therefore, when the second edition appeared, it included only the first divisions of studies — those famous lessons which are now known to thousands as "THE CULTURE OF COURAGE." It is a training in eliminating the every-day fears which have burdened men and women for ages.

This new volume, to be known as "CULTURE OF COURAGE, Vol. 2," contains a still further discussion of the subject of courage culture. It enters a subtle field seldom analyzed — how superstitions and unreasonable phases of religious influence have swayed and shackled multitudes. Nothing in the history of human progress has done more to retard the expression of self-unfoldment than these superstitions — and all because men lacked the knowledge and courage to escape from them.

In addition to these higher studies in Courage, we have added to this book several other gems by Dr. Haddock — which appear in none of his other works. Yielding to the constant call "I want anything Dr. Haddock may write" — we offer the present volume, believing you will find it well worth while.

THE PELTON PUBLISHING CO.

Thy Self

I asked of These revealment of my need:
The Seas, the Hills, the Starry Vault, and Life.
The first cried, "Action! Thou art Spirit freed;"
The second, "Poise! Defeat is bred of strife;"
The third Galactic, "Power in the Deed!"

To war I went with sounding drum and fife—
To faith I turned in moods receptive rife—
At last stood awed where human empires breed.

But ne'er the thing I urged these Masters taught.
How act? How *stand? What* power—and how *gain?*
Seas, Hills and Stars—War, Faith and World in vain!
Then up spake Life: "Oh, simple soul distraught!
Pause, Action, Power for thy rule *complain:*
Thou art the King, thy Self the King's Domain!

FRANK CHANNING HADDOCK.

THE CULTURE OF COURAGE.

VOLUME TWO

THOU ART THE CENTRE.

Thou art the centre of a spaceless sphere
That once revolves in one eternal year—
The All That Is, Reality Supreme.

Into thy mind's sequestered nerve-cells stream
To make thy selfhood Being's perfect theme,
Innumerable force-lines, fine and clear.

Reflect in self the Law-Ways that appear
In planets yonder and in atoms near,
Till one with That is every thought and dream.

Then shalt thou know the things that falsely seem
Are but the passing shadow-forms, and deem
Thyself the real, untroubled by their fear.

If thou art centre, thou art conscious seer
Of welfare: Lord of all things far or here—
Master, in love, of Empire's Law Supreme.

— THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER XIV.

Common Superstitions and Their Causes.

"For my part, I hold that superstition and unreason are the worst enemies of the human race, while science and reason are its greatest friends."—*Ernst Haeckel.*

IT is related that Nobius, the zoölogist, "placed a pike on one side of a water-basin that had been divided into two separate compartments by a pane of glass; all kinds of little animals upon which the pike usually preys were placed in the adjoining space. The pike at once made for the animals, but instead of the expected morsel he received a smart blow from the glass. After several repetitions he finally learned to give up the prey. A few weeks later the pane of glass was removed and the pike was now free to move around the other animals; he could not, however, be prevailed upon to attack them. He had manifestly made a law of nature for himself. To fall upon these animals results in a blow on the jaws. A man would, under similar circumstances, try to analyze the complex occurrence into its simple elements."

The last remark of this quotation is true of man as a race, but of many individual men it is anything other than true. Let us observe:

We make laws of Nature and Deity for ourselves, since such laws are merely our conclusions based on observations, and oftentimes the conclusions are false, as in the case of the pike, and, because they are false, constitute barriers which we thus place before our progress.

Superstition is like the pane of glass placed in the water-basin of Nobius; hence, we frequently resemble the pike in the fact that we do not fearlessly attack that obstruction and discover the realities and laws actually involved.

We fear to assault the Unknown and the Mysterious; we assume that barriers which have previously met us must always remain. These attitudes are error. There are no barriers to human progress, reasonably speaking, save improvable endowment and fear to unfold endowment. So rapidly as we accept this truth shall we pass the barriers created by superstition and imagination, live by reason and experience, lose our fears, and find then that superstition has already vanished — like a wraith of the night at dawn of day. This suggests the inquiry, What is superstition?

The Main Causes of Superstition.

The word "superstition" is primarily derived from the Latin, *super,* "above," and *sto,* "I stand." These words anciently combined to make *superstes,* "standing over or by," which signified "a witness." The Latin *superstitio* meant, "a standing over or by something in amazement and awe," referring originally to witnessing and fearing some appearance or act of the gods. Said a Roman orator: "Superstition is the unreasoning fear of God." Superstition always misconceives Deity, as an ancient saying tersely declared: *Diabolus est Deus inversus* —"The Devil is God inverted."

Spurred on by self-interest and ignorance, man has sought to explain the world and its forces and to adjust himself thereto, so filling earth and heaven with the creations of his own thought. Always has he *created all the truth he knows,* and, incidentally, the

superstitions of history. Both truth and superstition, as they arise in man's mind, are products of his thought-action: they *are*, because he *thinks* them into being for himself. To receive truth is to think it; to think truth is to create it so far as it is known. Superstition is *false* thinking; truth is *true* thinking. The essence of superstition is that it pretends to be what it is not. The essence of truth is that it is reality stripped of pretentions. Truth, in man's mind, is what is left of his thinking after ignorance and superstition have been eliminated. For reasons thus indicated, we conclude that no field of human life is, thus far, free from superstition or void of truth.

Let us say, then, that *superstition is belief or practice, or both, founded on irrational credulity, or fear, or both;* the credulity more often concerning the facts than the deductions drawn from the facts. With such a conception in mind, the causes of superstition are readily listed, as follows:

First, of the General Order. The most general causes may be named as (1) Experience with the Unknown and Mysterious; (2) Desire to Explain Objects and Events; (3) Desire for Personal Welfare; (4) Ignorance; (5) Perverted Reasoning; (6) Unfounded Reliance; and (7) Unfounded Fear.

These causes operate to develop superstition in all classes and in the fields both of the common life and of science and theology.

Secondly, of the Common Life. In addition to the main causes, or in analysis thereof, may be mentioned the following for the common life:

1. Premonition;
2. Coincidence;
3. Suggestion;
4. Anticipation;
5. Imagination;
6. Enlarging Narrative;

7. Desire to Explain; 8. Desire for Welfare;
9. Influence of Mystery, etc.; 10. Nervous Reaction.

Thirdly, of the Superior Life. Causes operative to produce superstition in the superior life are seen in:

1. The Natural Desire to Explain Worlds and Life;
2. An Ineradicable Desire for Personal Welfare;
3. Unquestioning Acceptance of Authority;
4. Interpretation of Nature and History in Terms of a Given Age-Thought;
5. Anticipation and Imagination;
6. Lack of Inducement to Clear and Distinct Thinking;
7. Lack of Clear Thought-Processes and Thought-Products;
8. The Reign of Fear-Thought inspiring Fear-Feeling;
9. The Dynamic Idea. Discussion of this cause will be deferred to later pages.

We take up these causes in the order given. This course is desirable because superstition itself casts a shadow and suggests fear *lest* we shall become superstitious. The word is spelled by initials of the words stating the fact as follows: *Superstition Unbalances Power's Essential Reason So Truly, It Tortures Its Own Nerves.* When we discover the explanation of superstition, we should — *cease* to *worry lest* we fall under its sway, and *cease to fear* objects and forces to which it refers. No one makes ado about the mistakes of childhood: these we assume to be inevitable, and we continue on our way undisturbed by such matters. It is error on the part of minds that seem to be obsessed with the idea of making war on beliefs and myths — to *forget* the purely incidental character of superstition in man's development and to *emphasize* this — attack on superstition rather than this — the advancement of knowledge. Seeking to avoid this error, I go into

matters here which may seem foreign to our subject, courage, with the hope of displacing fear by the knowledge presented, because the fears that are engendered by superstition can be overcome more effectively by truth possessed than by advice to manufacture courage. Let us cease to fear that *we may* be superstitious. We come, then, to the great divisions of the present discussion.

I. Causes of Common Superstitions: Regimes.

Enumeration of these causes in detail has already been made. It remains, now, to examine them in their order, so that it may appear that all fears related to superstition are groundless, and thus, that the superstitions themselves, of every sort and variety, are without justification.

First Cause Common: *Premonition.* This signifies a warning notion or feeling that "something is about to occur." Thus, in a work of fiction we have the following: "And with the strange sixth sense of the accustomed woodsman, Sam felt as they traveled that something was wrong. From time to time he stopped suddenly, every nerve quivering, his nostrils wide, like some wild thing alert for danger. And always the other five senses, on which his mind depended, denied the sixth. Nothing stirred but the creatures of the wilderness." As it afterward developed, the man was being followed. His uneasiness was a subconscious premonition.

Primitive man could scarcely have survived without this power of a "sixth" sense, and the same is active to-day, not alone in intuitive woman, but also oftentimes in the business man of the hardest kind of sanity. The psychic self does not depend altogether for guidance

on the five senses. The five senses are often the very poorest of guides. We frequently feel more than we can touch, see more than we can vision, and hear more than we can distinguish. For these facts we may refer to telepathy, or clairaudience, or clairvoyance; the reference is simply an attempt at explanation. So long as we have premonitions without explanation, we are involved in mystery, and are likely to be shadowed by fears. Thus have natural mental operations due to actual facts begotten superstition because the facts could not be discovered or the mental operations could not be understood. The task raised, then, is this: to find the middle way between scouting premonitions utterly and permitting them regulated play in our life. Hence the regime:

Regime: *Discriminating Use of Premonitions.* You are invited to employ all your powers in the business of successful living: to heed premonitions, but to test them — to cultivate the gifts which they indicate, but to scrutinize those gifts by practical common sense. It is superstitious to fear *lest* you be superstitious, and, *against* that fear, to fear the reasonable exercise of any psychic ability that you may possess. Yet it is equally superstitious to *depend* on any "sixth" sense while ignoring the five senses, and to fear evil if you *refuse* so to depend. Kindly read again — slowly.

Second Cause Common: *Coincidence.* Any event can be coincidental. Indeed there are those who make of cause and effect merely invariable coincidence. The idea of "mere coincidence" often obscures actual facts. It is the office of reason to designate the true coincidence, yet deprive it of false power.

Many superstitions thrive on "chance" happenings. If one observes the new moon over the left shoulder and

forthwith breaks his arm, or if one sows his crops in "the full of the moon" and straightway reaps an abundant harvest, here are evident coincidences that have no relation to the events other than that of sequence. The antecedents have no character of cause for the consequents. But if the sequence follows several times in succession, the primitive type of mind gets the idea of cause and effect, and feels that "there's something in it." Thus have grown up innumerable superstitions in the past, and thus are many superstitions perpetuated to-day. Always, along with the superstition springs up some degree of fear if one chances to see the moon over the right shoulder or happens to plant in any other time than the "full of the moon," and so on, and so on.

Of course, while coincidence may serve to *point out* cause, coincidence never *is* cause. The reasonable thing suggested is — search for the actual cause. A degree of ignorance finds cause lurking in coincidence on the mere suggestion of coincidence; and a different sort of ignorance scouts coincidence as of no value whatever. There are those who attribute cures of illness always either to medicine or to mental treatment, and there are others who invariably make the cure a mere coincidence. In each case the conclusion depends upon the prevaling notions. The true attitude consists in openmindedness to all claimed facts until they are proven or disproven, and in holding firmly the proposition that all things in our Universe express in some way what we call "natural law." The regime is evident:

Regime: *Investigating Coincidence.* You are invited to cultivate and maintain the attitude of investigation, for thus you avoid a common error — explanation by coincidence in favor of a real superstition, or, explanation against what appears to be a superstition,

but is not. In fact, we have here a question for later consideration: Do some so-called superstitions turn out to be reasonable conclusions?

Third Cause Common: *Suggestion.* By suggestion I mean here the inducement of a thought or action, or both. Thus, to illustrate one phase of suggestion: if we see a manlike white object in the night, we may think either of a living person or of a "ghost," and we may be induced by the thought to approach the person or to retreat from the "apparition." With primitive man, when the breath left the body, the real individual had "gone away." So the breath came to signify the soul. Naturally enough, a strange appearance, discovered in darkness, would be thought of as a spirit — "breath." We are all familiar with suggestions of this order.

Suggestion, to indicate another phase, operates also in coincidences: as, when finding a horseshoe is followed by "good luck," even if the "luck" results from our own sensible activity, and a second finding suggests the former finding and the "luck," so that we proceed to preserve the shoe "for luck." If, when we are ill, we call a physician and recover health, it is suggested that the cure has been due to the medical man's drugs. Or, if we turn to a mental healer and recover, suggestion favors the healer. Indeed, suggestion in either case may inspire the psychic self to recuperative activity by its own initiative. In all such cases the truth may hide in some other factor, but the process of suggestion goes on, nevertheless, and it infallibly breeds superstition unless we guard against the *non-sequitur* in our reasoning. The trouble with much of our reasoning lies in the fact, not that the inference does not follow from the premises, but in the fact that one or both of the premises may be false.

Suggestion is further seen in many cases of premonition. The deeper self has its premonitions, let us say, but in our attempts at explanation we are apt to resort to unseen intelligences, or, ignoring such, to fall into the mood of the mysterious, the "creepy"—the superstitious state of fear or reliance. Our regime is thus indicated:

Regime: *Control and Use of Suggestion.* The remedy for the suggestions indicated is the *rational will* and the resolute and fearless *spirit of investigation.* Suggestions have often some sure basis: let us find that basis. They are often false: let us make sure about that. They are often true: let us get at the facts. In other words, superstitious suggestions fade away before that equipoise which yields neither for nor against suggestion until reason finds true premises and draws correct conclusions.

You are invited to test every suggestion probably running to superstition with this question: *"Can I explain this event or this mysterious power equally well in two ways, one simple and natural, the other merely possible and more or less 'occult'?"* and, if you discover such double opportunity for explanation, you are invited to accept tentatively the simple and natural reasoning, and to then wait for further light on the subject.

Fourth Cause Common: *Anticipation.* The attitude of anticipation is a kind of suggestion, since it induces activities in keeping with, and likely to demonstrate, its controlling idea; also, since it stimulates the subconscious self to see in any coincidence its own verification. If you anticipate trouble because you have broken a dish, it is quite probable that you will unconsciously thereby induce mental and physical

states which will demonstrate the "bad luck" of the occurrence. When the machine begins in the morning to "go wrong" you anticipate that it will continue to do so during that day, or you may secretly think it "possessed," and you will then surely look for mishaps. The machine will simply react to your management, however. The real disordered and "possessed" machine is your self. You bring about what you anticipate. When men in ancient Rome consulted the oracles, replies were often cunningly equivocal (as they are today in similar cases); or, perhaps, were really believed by the divine priest or priestess; nevertheless, anticipation paved the way for some sort of verification, and always there was superstitious reverence for the oracle, built up by coincidence and suggestion, to excuse or explain any failure. Any ruling idea of good or evil fortune suggests interpretation of any event in harmony with itself. The ruling idea anticipates a result, and then makes it true whether or no.

Regime: *All Anticipation Based on Clear Reasoning.* You are invited to cultivate the habit of declining anticipation founded on anything whatever of an "occult" character, and to ground your confidence concerning coming events on two supreme factors: *Energetic and assured thought, and action corresponding therewith,* remembering that until you have found the laws that govern objects and conditions, you are never entitled to assume the repetition of occurrences merely from previous experience. The fact that an event has taken place many times in such and such a way may be a sure ground for believing that it will in the future take place in the same way, but this probability springs from, not alone past experience, but also knowledge of laws.

Fifth Cause Common: *Imagination.* In imagination we combine, reduce, and enlarge past experiences, and also create that which has no actual existence, save in the mind. What imagination shall do depends upon the general mental condition and the state of the nerves on a given occasion. If the senses are somewhat obscured, the mind confused, and the nerves "on the rack," we are probably ready to create almost any fancy — phantom ships and "haunts" and mythical monsters. So, also, people who are sadly afflicted with disease often create temporary unproven feelings, that is, health-ideas, which swamp illness-ideas under the excitement of spectacular "cures" by the hundred. It is easy enough to create and maintain ideas of misfortune, disease and death. Innumerable are the premonitions that never come true, the coincidences that never demonstrate, because we give events imaginary interpretations. Under the spell of old traditions and religious fears, the present world has been filled with uncanny and "heavenly" shapes, the "future" world with Golden Cities, Flowery Kingdoms, burning hells, icy wastes, purgatorial torments, devils and wrathful gods. And such creations are not all of the past, since they linger on in countless minds and cramp and torture countless souls. The remedy is an iron hand on imagination, the cool quest of reason, the steady test of experience, the matter-of-fact interpretation, and the wider sober outlook of mental control and sanity.

Regime: *Control of Imagination.* You are invited to cultivate these last-named factors, and I give you the affirmations below to that end:

"I am a positive self, and fear no evil."

"I insist on facts, all the facts, and nothing but the facts."

"I know that all things operate according to 'natural law,' if only we can discover the law."

"I deny phantoms, monsters, 'good luck' and 'bad luck' (in their common meaning), *burning hells, devils having rights over men, and angry gods."*

"I am for health, sanity, actual facts, necessary conclusions, and the truth — whatever it is — wherever it leads."

Sixth Cause Common: *Enlarging Narrative.* We are all familiar with the unreliability of the senses and of human testimony,— under certain circumstances,— and we know that the narration of any event will differ more or less as given by two persons, and especially as handed on by a series of persons. That which at first was related with discrimination and exceptions comes later to be given without such important qualifications, and frequently that which was originally declared not true, or merely possible, is now declared to be true or actual. Meanwhile, every narrator adds a little to the previous history. Finally, many propositions are repeated with the omission of their earlier figurative meaning, so that in hundreds of instances men come to believe literally in matters which do not exist at all and which only require examination early enough to disprove. If, however, examination comes too late, it is then "heresy" of some sort, and superstition and authority unite to perpetuate the error.

Regime: *Stripping Narrative to Fact.* The remedy consists in demanding the naked truth in narrative, and in constantly clearing away all the rubbish that tends to gather around real facts and events, until we have gotten down to the actual originals.

For, observe the laws of the matter. Superstition begins in some real natural occurrence. This is the *first law.*

Superstition grows so long as it is active. This is the *second law.*

No superstition can live — as a real superstition, although its fears may linger — after its growths have been torn away and its original bare facts have been revealed. This is the *third law.*

Provided, reason insists on explaining the *unknown* by means of the already actually *known.* This is the *final climacteric law.* In openmindedness we should be prodigal, but in explaining the unknown *by* the unknown we should be misers to the last degree.

The Seventh and Eighth Causes Common are deferred to the following centre-page caption.

Ninth Cause Common: *The Influence of Mystery.* Mystery and vastness fill us with a feeling that consists of "a trooping stage" of vague, suggestive and fantastic ideas. Many things we can *describe* because they are clear and distinct — and do not seem to draw into their "field" other things that are unclear and indistinct, textured together, shading off into shadow and infinity. But other matters we can only *appreciate,*— feel for ourselves,— because they are *not* clear and distinct and *do* draw into their own "field" all sorts of vaguely suggested possible realities, touched by imagination and merging into the vast, the unknown, the wonderful. The sea, the desert, the mountains, the forest, the sky at night, when certain moods are with us, are examples. Life, also, is of such character in some of its questioning, reverential or fearful moments. Given, just the right mental state, and we are ready for almost any superstition. For centuries man has been in such right state almost incessantly, so that the air of to-day is full of phantom things, the evil shadows, the fickle elfs, the mighty monsters of the past. Always the vast

unknown surrounds us with its desert or ocean walls, its forest gloom, its frowning ramparts; and always we have beneath our feet an infinite abyss and over our heads a mighty roof of awful girth and splendor. It is not surprising that the right moods are commonly with us, and that we feel in our souls, even when we scout, that "really there 's something in it"— in that witch-hazel fork, that charm, that "law," that doctrine, that devil, that devilish deity.

Regime: *Mastering the Mysterious.* Let us *understand that we have created all our superstitions, all our religions, all our sciences, all our philosophies.* There is not a single word, statement, proposition, description, narrative, truth, fact, law, in any book, extant or gone, "sacred" or "profane," that has not been placed there by man's hand and mind. Let us also understand that there is not an ion, atom, molecule, crystal, solid, liquid, gas, cell, organ, animal, region of earth, star, galaxy, or "void" space, throughout the Universe, that is not man's freely to investigate and discover, and analyze and explain, and explore and *master,* to the limit of personal consciousness. If we create *all* our beliefs, and if the *whole* Universe is ours to travel and study without hindrance, surely the vast and mysterious should lose their power to fill us with the awe that fears. No one is afraid of his own front yard. *The Universe is man's front yard,* because only the present Universe really is, the past System has vanished and is powerless, and that which now lies open before us is as free to our search and possession as the lawn of our homes.

In such a mood of daylight feeling of relationship with worlds and their contents, of absolute freedom, of utter response to the willingness of things to be studied

and mastered, and of the altogether naturalness of all events,— in such a mood superstition dies of a surplus of sun and fresh air. You are invited to cultivate the feeling and attitude here indicated, so far as superstitions are concerned. For a time, the thought that would make the Universe your front yard, so to speak, — yours with readiness to reveal and be friendly,— may seem vague and meaningless, and for a time the effort to develop the thought may appear to be unavailing, but if you will strive for the thought and patiently continue the effort, you will come to a sense of intimacy with all nature and the starry realms above which will make their vastness and mystery merely the greatness and wonder of a friend who is superior to yourself, but ready always to companion with you. In the end, of course, your fears and the reliance of superstitious notions must totally vanish.

Tenth Cause Common: *Nervous Reaction.* Our emotions are often induced by our nervous states. The nervous states may be due to purely physical causes, such as indigestion, loss of sleep, a clogged system, or the east wind. But they may also be due to *ideas* — of various sorts. Good news stimulates the nervous organism to pleasant activity, and our first fine *emotions* come in that event, *not* because of the *news,* but because of *nerve-action.* The news is "thrown against the walls" of the mind, so to speak, the nerves "vibrate," and we *feel* happy because happy *ideas* have been suggested. Similarly in reverse instances. Thus, superstitious fears of this kind do not result *directly* from what we see, hear, touch, but from *suggested thought* which stimulates the nerves to an activity that the mind *associates* with danger, or misfortune, or failure of good fortune: the associated

ideas becoming *feeling* by mental reaction to the *nervous disturbance.*

You do not *fear* because you are *superstitious;* you are *superstitious* because you *fear.* You do not rely upon horseshoes, amulets, lunar conditions — all the list — because superstition masters you; the latter state results from your reliance. One insists that the witch-hazel fork indicates running water under the ground surface: he does not so insist because of alleged superstition, but the insistence breeds the alleged superstition. The nervous system, in the case of reliance on signs, omens, charms, etc., responds to the mere *idea,* gets excited, starts up feelings,— thrills, shudders, quakes, spasms,— until the mind is ready by habit to believe almost anything, to place confidence therein, and to fear proceeding in any contrary direction.

Regime: *Control of Nerve-Reaction.* Again our remedy seems plain. Let us declare succinctly that nerves have just one function, that of irritability, or reaction to stimuli. The nervous system, whether it be quiescent or violently agitated or ecstatically "vibratory," informs us of no law, fact or truth. The nerves are "wires" whose action we must *interpret.* The sight-feeling, sound-feeling, contact-feeling does not tell you anything, as is true of the telegrapher's dots and dashes; the *self* alone tells the self what nerve-actions *mean.* The violent agitation of nerves does not speak "danger" to you: you think the *word* because the agitation has come to be a sign which you habitually interpret in that way. Nerves cannot think. That they can is one of the superstitions of science. The man who believes that "the brain secretes thought" may be superior to the man who imagines the curative power of the horse chestnut, but both men live in the

same kind of mental atmosphere. The harmonious "vibrations" of your nerves do not advise you of the state of an Infinite Mind toward you; you merely imagine this thing from a nervous condition. Perhaps the imagination chances to be correct, but that is a mere coincidence, since *conduct alone* it is that you can interpret infallibly in this respect. An "exalted" nervous state may be read by the self as the feeling of bliss because it means a cluster of *welfare-ideas* in your mind, but the state declares no more than the oscillations of a tuning-fork can declare. If, then, nerves give us neither fact nor truth, the interpretation of their action is solely for the self. Nervous fears, therefore, need no longer control us because they are *our own* ideas and feelings associated with mere sensations. In proof of this statement is the fact that we become used to many previously nerve-exciting experiences; that is, the experiences no longer suggest nerve-exciting ideas, but are accompanied by ideas of the commonplace order.

You are invited to cultivate the attitude of *mastery over mental interpretations of nervous states,* refusing the suggested ideas of danger and fear and corresponding body-action, holding ever in mind the truth: "*This agitation is merely of the nerves, not to be interpreted, as of yore, but to be associated with ideas of self-adequacy and courage.*"

We pass, now, to the Causes of Superior Superstition, but with the suggestion that the former causes and those to follow are more or less similar, and that repetition of thought will necessarily occur, for that reason. The items which we are now to discuss are related to the very deepest phases of our highest nature, and have a correspondingly superior importance. These

facts indicate a reason for the distinction made between the common and the superior varieties of superstition.

II. Causes of Superior Superstitions: Regimes.

As intimated in the preceding paragraph, causes indicated under the last caption are more or less at work in the development of the greater superstitions of the world. We refer to two of these causes not already discussed, at this point, and proceed, then, to the larger phases of our subject.

First Cause Superior (Seventh Cause Common) — *The Desire to Explain.* The desire to know or to explain has helped to create the great myths of ancient times. Man began his quest for knowledge with the objects that he found around him, with himself and his life, and with the mighty forces of Nature. The results of his attempts at explanation appear in his languages and his religions. So, in his early Latin history, he came to speak of himself as *Homo,* from *humus,* "soil" — "one made of the dust;" or, as *Mortalis* (Latin), *Brotos* (Greek), and, earlier still, as *Marto* (Sanscrit), "he who dies," or, as *Man,* from *ma,* "to measure,"— *man* meaning, "to think." The idea of *life* sprang from words meaning "breath," and the "invisible ones" were spirits, as it were, "breath-people." The word *mri* meant "to grind down," "to destroy," and *mrityu* was *Death,* "the Destroyer." *Anima* meant originally "blooming" or "breathing," like spirit, from *spirare,* "to breathe," and was derived from a root, *an,* "to blow," which gives us *anila,* "mind," in Sanscrit, and *animos,* "mind," in Greek. Ghost, the German *Geist,* is based on the same conception. It is clearly related to another Gothic word, *saivs,* which meant "the sea." The sea was *si* or *siv,* the Greek, *seio,* "to shake." The soul was a sea within —"tossed-about water."

In all this, language expresses a conclusion as from a question — like: "What about this?" The answer is an explanation given in a word. The great objects and forces in Nature received similar treatment. Everywhere action was observed, with various results, so that Nature, to man ("he who thinks"), seemed to be made up of, or to hide, many actors, and came to be personified or to conceal innumerable personalities, and to these personalities were given names characteristic of the actions and results observed. Such agents were subtle and powerful, and belonged to a superior class of beings which were friendly or unfriendly to man. They were gods and demons. These conceptions seemed to explain what man found in the world about him. The desire to explain was natural in mind, and it worked inevitably, as a matter of course, because of restless mental activity in man's intelligence. The desire for welfare, however, modified the explanation in accordance with what seemed to make for or against welfare, and hence the two desires, in coöperation with other factors herein mentioned, created false knowledge and unfounded beliefs, that is, superstitions.

Regime: *Explanation through Fact.* Our remedy consists in compelling explanation to *issue only from facts.* You are invited to form the following habit of mental action: First, make sure that the *matter to be explained* is itself *actual* — a fact; examine it, get under it, go through it and all around it — *know* that it is *real.* Secondly, seek that explanation which is *most natural*, most in accordance with what everybody knows, especially the student of science; do not build explanations out of mysteries; build out of facts. Thirdly, make sure of the *facts used in the explanation*, and use those facts that are *nearest the visible, tangible*

world — facts that are *parts of that world* — *first* in preference to those that are "occult." Fourthly, settle on your explaining conclusion *slowly;* give the *sane* mind time to work out its sanest conclusions.

Second Cause Superior (Eighth Cause Common)— *Desire for Welfare.* As just suggested, desire for welfare modifies explanation. In our accounting for things, we are biased more or less by self-interest. Early man found Nature sometimes friendly and companionable, but for the most part the world was hard and implacable (because man knew not how to use the Universe by the power of thought). Storms, plagues, disasters, death, showed that the gods were angry or that the demons were active. Plenty of food, sunshine and peace, especially good health and success in wars and adventures, indicated favor from corresponding sources. It was necessary to win the unseen to friendship, and to maintain that relation: to be thankful and show proper appreciation and reverence or to appease wrath and avert disaster. Moreover there were always premonitions, anticipations, suggestions, coincidences and imaginations to stir the soul and give all sorts of explanations in harmony therewith. Credulity was simple. The attitude toward unseen things was ever conciliatory, grateful, trustful, fearful. Ignorant and helpless, yet alive in spirit and driven by his best intelligence to strive to get on, avert danger, court favor, win his way,— man did the most natural thing in the Universe: grew superstitions with amazing fecundity, "sinned" like a poor, hunted, fear-ridden animal as he was, and created gods to suit himself, since there was no one in sight to create gods for him; which means, that he created gods exactly like himself because he was the best pattern to be found, and evolved

religions which were nothing other than his own interpreting thought thrown up on the blue vault of heaven, because there was no other way in which he could get his religions. It was inevitable that man should do all this, and the only way for him. That he should be superstitious and a "sinner" was prophesied in the first nebula of space. That he should be hounded and ridden by fear was a fact only to be justified in any court by ultimate progress "from glory unto glory," with an Infinite placed absolutely at his disposal for final welfare, if only he could learn how to use that Infinite.

Regime: *Welfare through Facts and Reason.* You are invited to seek personal welfare on the highway of *facts that make for sane conclusions.* A woman to whom had been presented an opportunity for investment in a company which was boring for oil, wrote on a slip of paper a question pertaining to the matter, and handed the slip to a psychometrist, the latter not knowing the question's authorship. The reply "saw great wealth in connection with the paper," and the investment was made. Multitudes of people travel this hard road of experience. Thus in other matters. You are invited to shun such methods. Your sanity and welfare lie on the way of the mind that bombards earth and life with the questions: *"What are the real, hard facts? What do the facts mean? What is the sure way of using them? What will the use I make of them in all probability lead to?"* A better method for developing courage and securing real welfare could scarcely be suggested.

Third Cause Superior — *Unquestioning Acceptance of Authority.* I have tried to discover why man should so easily be led to confidence in mere authority. Three answers to the question may be suggested.

We are naturally *imitative*, because the most of our conduct is automatic, "goes of itself," under the impulse of ideas that chance along and that chance to become dynamic or ruling. Thus, we observe popular superstitions and unconsciously take them on. This phase of the matter will receive definite attention later, when we come to discuss the "Dynamic Idea."

We are naturally *trustful*, since it is demonstrated by experience that some people possess superior minds and culture, and since the common run of people are for the most part reliable.

And we are driven, from cradle to old age, by the *necessity to work*, so that in many instances we have neither time nor ability to investigate for ourselves the great problems of life.

These three matters maintain in us an attitude of acceptance for accredited authority — until a general "atmosphere," sometimes seemingly almost "occult" is developed among us which takes the place of investigation in its bearing on previously accepted propositions. This "atmosphere" is itself a challenge to authority, and it makes many beliefs impossible *without* individual investigation.

The following quotation will illustrate the subject indicated. "In the former ages of ignorance and superstition, the intimate association which had been formed, in the prevailing systems of education, between truth and error, had given to the latter an ascendant over the minds of men, which it could never have acquired if divested of such an alliance. The case has, of late years, been most remarkably reversed: the common sense of mankind in consequence of the growth of a more liberal spirit of inquiry, has revolted against many of those absurdities which had so long held human reason in captivity."

Take, for example, the story that Eve sprang from a rib of Adam. All sorts of minds have accepted this poem as prose fact, simply because they have surrendered to authority. To-day we breathe a different "atmosphere," and we decline to take the story literally, not because we have investigated ancient Hebrew and early religions and literatures, nor because we are scientifically educated, since science knows nothing about the "first pair," either of man or of his animal progenitors, nor yet because we accept the statements of adverse authorities, but simply because our mental environment makes the story impossible, on general principles. Until our mind-air changes, however, we go on accepting that which authority has established for us. The appropriate regime is thus indicated.

Regime: *Scrutinizing Authority.* Our remedy for the great world-superstitions consists in declining to accept any authority merely *because* it is authority. This means that you are invited to settle down on the proposition: "*There is no authority for my thought and life which is independent of alterior demonstration.*" For examples:

A *court* is not authority unless its opinions are based on existing law. A precedent is authority only as we *make it so.* Science is no authority apart from experience and reason. The medical man is no authority if he cannot do what his lay friend, the mental healer, can do — lead you back to health. Theology has no authority except its accidental hits on some truth. There is no authority in a creed, a theology, a philosophy, other than the truth. There is no authority that shall tell us what is and what is not truth, other than experience interpreted by reason. These propositions suggest that we scrutinize authority

whenever it appears in the way of life. Let us, then, as example of the position here insisted upon, consider three kinds of authority with which we are all very familiar.

1. *The Authority of a Teacher.* The teacher is human, and must acquire wisdom and truth either through *intuition* or through *experience.* The great world-teachers have been Moses, Zoroaster, Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Buddha, Mohammed, Jesus and Paul. These *all* lived in a body of flesh, and thought with a human mind. These all had intuitions and profited by experience. If Jesus is the (claimed) superior in the West, Zoroaster, or Confucius, or Buddha, or Mohammed, is a (claimed) superior in the East. Let us say, now, that Jesus is the greatest of all teachers: unquestionablyhe was. Wherein consists his authority?

If it be said, "In his divinity," this may mean either his *divineness* or his *deity.* If his divinity means his *divineness,* and *not* his *deity,* that divineness must consist in the immense superiority of *his humanity* over *our* humanity; not superiority by way of difference in *kind,* but superiority by way of difference in *perfection.* What is the evidence of this superiority of his human perfection? We can only judge this matter from what we *could have observed* had we known him when living, since his inner self was invisible, and nothing other could have been given us for judgment. What we could have observed, had we known him in the body, was made up of *conduct* and *teachings.* The superiority of his *teachings* depended upon the superior quality and amount of *truth* that he uttered. The superiority of his *conduct* depended upon his *harmony with that truth.* The authority of Jesus springs, not from his *divineness,* but from the *demonstration* of his divineness, namely,

his *conduct* and the *truth* of his teachings. Whether his teachings and conduct harmonized *in fact*, and whether or not his teachings *were* truth, are matters which we must decide by the best reason that we possess and the practical demonstration of human experience in the large. There is no other way.

If, again, the divinity of Jesus means his *deity*, how are we to know that fact? Surely not by being told so, for then *his* authority depends on this other authority. But we could not have seen his deity — of course — had we lived in his time. If it be said that he *claimed* to be deity, this claim must be made out by *interpretation of his words* — the words in which the claim is set forth. The only person who can authoritatively interpret the words of the claim is the person who reads the words — *yourself*. No one else can interpret them *for* you, for where is the authority of this other person to do so? Another person can give his *opinion* on the matter — no more; such opinion can have no authority for you unless you *concede* the authority, and *when* you concede it you *adopt it* — that is, constitute yourself the authority. Jesus could have no authority to assert his deity by mere words, since in this case his statement is simply substituted for this other inadmissible authority. The authority of Jesus never can be founded on a verbal claim. We are driven, then, to his *conduct* and his *teachings* as supports of the idea of his deity. But this brings us, again, to interpretation of the conduct and teachings, and that interpretation can be authoritatively made out only by the person who studies the life — that is, *by yourself*.

It is error to look for some other mysterious factor here — and it is really superstitious to do so. To the tests, truth and conduct, even Deity must be subjected,

especially since all that we know about Deity is exactly what we think. Precisely so in regard to any human teacher — any among the world's greatest and best. Since all are human, their authority, where conduct is concerned, is truth. The test of truth is a matter which again suggests a deferred question, already hinted at, and which we shall reach in due time.

2. *The Authority of a Book.* Let us try to be clear on this subject, and permit no vague notion to confuse us. We may take up a book entitled, "Arithmetic" or "Differential Calculus." This book is "authority," it is said; but that can only be true in the sense that some mathematicians have acquired confidence in its author,—"one who makes to grow,"— and have *conceded* an authority to its pages. Such "authority," being a concession, is not a demonstration. Let us say that the mathematicians go through the book and work out all its problems, finding no errors, finding harmony always, and, applying its statements to intricate and vast astronomical data, discover that its figures and propositions adjust perfectly in demonstrating other truths. We will then conclude that this is a *book of truth.* It is, therefore, an authority. But its authority consists *solely* in its truth, and in *that* truth as *worked out* in the human mind. If the truth is to become authority to you, you must work out that truth —make it your own. The real authority, then, is the *truly-working human intellect*, speaking generally, and *your truly working mind,* speaking specifically — that is, in the real sense of true authority.

We cannot accept a book as authority merely because some one declares it to be authority, for we cannot base authority upon authority, especially if this "some one" is human and not ourselves. We may con-

cede a kind of "authority" to a book if we have confidence in its author, — and have confidence that we *know* who the author is,— which confidence is really our own opinion, and so, our own authority,—but pure authority in itself no book can have that is a human production other than its own truth. Always the question of human or divine authorship is a matter for *personal settlement,* for *individual* authority, since the matter comes inevitably at last to this solution. Always the truth has to be made out by the individual who discovers the authority — the reader — *yourself.*

Thus, the Western Book on religion is the Bible, and this is a library of books written by many authors. The authors were all human. We have no means of acquiring confidence in these authors, since they are all dead, except through demonstration of their truth-teachings. If it be said that they were *inspired,* the *only* evidence of this fact is the truth that they uttered or wrote. If it be said that the Book is the Divine Book or Word, the evidence, again, can be located in no fog of mystery, no claim of or by human authorities, no "keeper of eternal secrets," but must be sought precisely and solely in its truth, which is always a matter for *individual* interpretation through experience and reason. We need *not* say that the truth of the book is accidental or incidental or peculiar to Western life, but we *must* say that its authority is solely and precisely and absolutely its contents of truth — and that no man can declare what that truth is except the honest reader, who can declare the truth only for himself.

3. *The Authority of a Church.* Human beings organize, and are organized into, a church. Authority here is not of the church, is not of some person within

or above the church, but is solely of the *truth as interpreted by the members of the church.* The word, "church," comes from *kuros,* "strength," from Sanscrit, *ku,* "to be strong." There is no invisible person who can have authority over or in a church except as he demonstrates strength in the truth. And those who are to determine that he does this, are simply the people within the church. If it be said that the authority behind the church, its rites and ceremonies, its laws and spirit, is Deity, this is a mere human statement, and can be authority for no one who does not *concede* the statement. When the concession is made, the authority is not then in Deity, but is in the person making the concession. If the concession is made regardless of the truth represented by the church, made merely on some other human authority, it is superstition. If the concession is made because truth is perceived and acknowledged, the authority is not of the church, is not of the person claiming authority for the church — is solely of the truth as interpreted by the person perceiving and acknowledging the same.

But how are we to decide what is and what is not truth? Evidently by the outcome of experience showing that the so-called truth harmonizes with our human nature and tends to perfect it. A book has *no authority,* nor has a teacher, nor has a church, aside from the fact that the so-called truth given forth *works well in human experience.* Only the individual who *tries* such truth can decide that it works well for him. Always, then, the authority of teacher, book and church turns out to be the authority of the honest individual himself. The thing is inevitable.

Regime for Life: *Independence of Authority External to Self in Personal Affairs.* If, then, every-

thing must reduce to truth and conduct, and if no human being can possibly have authority in himself to determine for others what is or what is not truth, all ground for superstition in regard to teacher, book or church vanishes *in toto*. There remains, therefore, this conclusion: *that living men and women should decide for themselves all questions of the character indicated.* When they perform that act of decision, holding to the test of truth and conduct as working well for all, they will make mistakes, just as Authority declares they will,— which is its perennial shibboleth against liberty of thought and action,— but they will ultimately create an "atmosphere" of reason which shall supply the need of personal investigation in countless non-essential questions, because they will have formed certain broad and decisive conceptions concerning Nature and the Infinite that will lead them with vastly greater correctness than all the authorities and teachers and books and traditions in the world. This regime will be continued in that of the next Superior Cause.

Fourth Cause Superior — *Interpretation of Fact and Language in Terms of the Age-Thought.* The body of our personal thought grows. It is not a mere mass of habituated mental activities; it is a *system* peculiar to ourselves, which we have slowly created through experience and by reading and thinking. As such growth, it is in part due to our quest for truth, but is largely determined (not necessarily, but naturally) by inherited mental tendencies, our manner of living, and the age in which we work out our careers. When authorities rule, we submit, because we do not think of doing otherwise. When freedom of thought is "in the air," we begin to modify the body of thought in ourselves and in our class. We react to our environment, and thus

we interpret fact and language in terms of the surrounding mental life. This latter is the age-thought of our times.

Examples of the influence of the age-thought may prove instructive. It is said that "an eminent physician believed God created the world in six days and rested the seventh because there are but seven notes in music." Another musician declared "that there could only be three parts in harmony because there are but three persons in the Trinity." "There is no one who has not grown up under a load of beliefs — beliefs which he owes to the accidents of country or family, to the society he has frequented, to the books he has read, to the education he has received, and in general, to the circumstances which have concurred in the formation of his intellectual and moral habits. These beliefs may be true, or they may be false, or, what is more probable, they may be a medley of truths and errors. It is, however, under their influence that he studies, and through them, as through a prism, that he views and judges all the objects of knowledge."

In all past time men have construed Nature and "revelations" from above in ways that have fitted in with current thought. That is what we personally do in the sphere of our own minds: give meanings to things according to our present body of thought. So with all generations. The world has had, thus, the age-thought of Egypt, of Greece, of Rome, of the Middle Ages, and so on. For a thousand years the age-thought of Europe was Catholic Christian, with an absentee God, a representative Viceregent on earth at Rome, and every sort of superstition related to time and eternity, the world below and the world above, purgatory, hell and devils. Later came the age-thought of protest

and science and modern civilization. During all these periods, the ordinary man's opinions were determined for him before he was born. The things in which he believed, above those relating to everyday practical living, constituted a whole world of distorted, fantastic, luridly-colored, wonderful, irrational conceptions and interpretations. The race had sailed into a sea of tropical horrors and marvels, and what was one man's medium of interpretation for Nature, Bible and humanity, was every other man's medium. All people thought alike, because each mind simply reacted to the thought of the age. And our superstitions are "left-overs" from these "good old days" of the infantile fathers.

Regime: *Independence of Thought; Continued.* The personal work suggested should, of course, be comprehensive. We may say that it involves:

Responsiveness to the *freest best thought of the times*, which responsiveness cannot be forced, must be developed, and must be controlled as, in a sense, *secondary* to the *practical affairs of life.*

The method of development consists in *trying to find out what the freest, best thought around us really is as determined by general utility*, or by the question, "how would it work?" The method also consists, in the meantime, in *testing that thought by your own freest, best thinking*, and by discovering, out of the comparisons thus made, the *reasons* for your agreement or disagreement therewith.

Independence of thought is born when we insist on knowing the grounds of received opinions in the age or community in which we live. The moment we know these grounds, that moment we see that we think as we do, with or against current opinions, for *definite*

reasons, and these reasons are then found to have taken the place of all the "going" faiths and theories.

But the "atmosphere" of a place or a period exercises a subtle influence over us, after all, so that we accept many things as correct or true *without ever thinking of calling them in question.* Now, an "atmosphere" may be all in favor of a theory or a whole set of propositions, as the past shows. But, when an "atmosphere" indicates doubt concerning old things, it always signifies a *quest for truth* in some opposite direction. True independence of thought does not mean a mere negative attitude; it also means a positive attitude of *search for real truth.* Responsiveness to what your age thinks, therefore, includes a general sensing of reasonableness, trueness, worthwhileness; which sensing finds many old notions now impossible, and yet *wants to know what real values they once stood for and may cover* for the life of to-day. For example: this age repudiates the idea of external authority, but then, it distinctly stands for the to-self authority of the live man insisting on interpretations of life and fact that become his own because he catches the real spirit of the age, a desire to *get at the actual* truth; rather, insists upon the authority of the inner attitude of each man's thinking made his own.

Fifth Cause Superior — *Anticipation and Imagination.* Imagination is the pioneer of thought, but desire and anticipation impel its lead and inspire its creations, unless reason and practical experience regulate its work. We are apt to see what we anticipate, and to anticipate what we desire. This fact explains many a "wonderful" coincidence, many a "beautiful" interpretation, many an "irrefutable" conclusion. We do not see, interpret, understand contrary to desire

and anticipation, as a general rule. We are prejudiced for or against facts, laws, truths, creeds, philosophies, religions and sciences according to desire, and the desire anticipates the conclusions. This general fact has "led men to close their eyes against the most evident truths which were not in harmony with their adopted opinions. It is said that there was not a physician in Europe, above the age of forty, who would admit Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood." The scientists of France and England refused to yield to the demonstrations of Mesmer and Braid, and Huxley declined to give modern spiritism even "the ghost of a chance." The truths that live amid the errors of Christian Science have received only abuse from medical practitioners until loss of patronage has compelled a change of front. "On the other hand, it is finely observed by Bacon that 'the eye of human intellect is not dry, but receives a suffusion from the will and from the affections, so that it may almost be said to engender any science it pleases. For what a man wishes to be true, that he prefers believing.' And in another place, 'if the human intellect hath once taken a liking to any doctrine, either because received and accredited, or because otherwise pleasing, it draws everything else into harmony with that doctrine, and to its support, and albeit there may be found a more powerful array of contradictory instances, these, however, it either does not observe, or it contemns, or by distinction extenuates and rejects.'" Thus, our interpretations of life, literature and Nature are usually the things we expect to find, according to the influence of desire. The regime is evident.

Regime: *Control of Imagination and Anticipation.* The use of imagination as a pioneer is valid in all matters

of life. But in the realm of explanation, and in relation to beliefs, it is for imagination merely to apprehend what *might be*, in any given case; any anticipation that examination *shall discover* this "what might be" as *proven*, is totally illegitimate. In other words, we are justified in preconceiving our explanations, but never in *permitting expectation to conclude anything not absolutely called for by the actual facts which we already know.* You are, therefore, invited to make the quotation given below a principle in all your thinking, where you are dealing with the unknown:

"First, begin by finding out all you know on the subject. Do this as thoroughly as possible. Then be sure that you do not pass to the consideration of the unknown, except along lines definitely connected with that which is certainly known, and make sure that your conclusions, step by step, are demanded by the facts."

Sixth Cause Superior — *Lack of Inducement to Clear Thinking. First Section.* We may say that any mental activity is thought, and then we shall have before us the ordinary thinking of the mind, trained or untrained. This, as a matter of fact, very largely "goes of itself." That is to say, our minds act as they are impelled to act by their own nature and the stimuli of external things. In consequence, we have during the day innumerable sensations, we perceive innumerable objects and movements, we will to do things and we have feelings. Yet all this time we perhaps engage very little in true reasoning, our "thoughts" coming and going by association and suggestion, with no very great amount of guidance at all. For the reason that the mental action is so largely automatic, it is apt to be a touch-and-go affair, partial, unclear and indistinct. Observation is not usually comprehensive and sharply

defined, memories are wont to be swift and vague, consciousness is confused, imagination is "flighty," ideas are more or less blurred, our premises are just seized upon, and our conclusions are likely to be hasty and ill-drawn. In all this the emotions play an important part, and what we call will is too frequently mere impulse. Under such conditions our thinking lacks clearness and distinctness,— we do not sharply distinguish parts and wholes,— the unclear and indistinct thinking becomes habit, and the habit impels us to believe anything in the line of self-interest or our present body of thought. Such habit-thinking is the friend of all superstition, as the opposite is the latter's deadliest foe.

Regime: *Clear and Distinct Thinking Cultivated.* Real thought-processes are clear and distinct. This kind of mental action means: forming (a) *distinct concepts*, (b) *clear judgments*, and (c) *sure inferences*. By so much as we seek these mental conditions and activities, by so much will observation become sharp and comprehensive, memory more accurate, imagination regulated, emotion controlled, association and suggestion determined by purpose, and the will deliberative and masterful. The outcome must be — that we shall insist upon knowing facts as they are, on premises that are true, and on conclusions that are compelled by what goes before them. This is a rough sketch of clear and distinct thinking, regarded as a process. The results are: *clear* thoughts — that is, thoughts which are separated from entanglements, and *distinct* thoughts — thoughts the details of which we clearly make out. This subject will receive further consideration in the following chapter. Here is suggested our modern searchlight: illuminating any object or idea so that it is "blazed" out from surroundings, illuminating each

detail of object or idea so that this also becomes clear. That searchlight will expose all superstitions,— although it will not necessarily banish them, as we shall see later when we come to discover the influence of the dynamic idea in our thought-life.

Second Section. The common run of people are content with vague ideas and confused mental processes: receiving whatever has come to them of prevalent superstitions or chance truths, "no questions asked," not knowing the one from the other. The explanation for this automatic and unreasoning thought seems to be twofold: Man has always been driven to exhaustive effort for life itself, and has been too utterly indolent to force his mind into careful and prolonged investigation on the great problems of existence. But above all, there has never, until the present age, been any inducement to think clearly and distinctly on any subject, for the reason that authority has done the world's thinking for it. Moreover, authority does not think clearly and distinctly itself, and all its interests lie in the opposite direction. Not until a degree of physical freedom had become a common fact, and only as it had so become, could the notions occur to men to do their own thinking. By so much as freedom suggests independent thought, by so much does the thinker discover the responsibility for thinking *safely*,—in his own interest,— and therefore clearly and distinctly. There has been no inducement for such thinking in the past, because authority has settled all questions. Nobody, during the reign of authority, could feel responsibility for his thought. Nobody could ask, under such conditions, "What is truth?" since the question had already been answered "well enough." Nobody could fear discovery of truth under these circumstances, since authority

had found all the truth anyone needed. It did not for ages occur to people to start out on their own initiative in a search for truth. All the truth there was had been uncovered, labeled and locked up, out of harm's way. Even the Infinite could not properly care for truth; hence, the church was delegated as its conservator. Although the church consisted of men only, it had the "ear of the Almighty" through certain individuals who chanced to be His favorites. In consequence, any other man who insisted upon doing his own thinking was necessarily *non grata* with the Infinite — and the church. The "free thinker" has all along been a sort of outlaw among "respectable" people. This has been his standing, not because his thoughts have been *understood*, nor because they have been demonstrably *false*, but simply because they have always been *different*. It is still abhorrent to be "different," and a crime to be a "free thinker." Courage, however, holds to another opinion, and suggests a regime like the following.

Regime: *Responsibility for Clear and Distinct Thinking.* You are invited to do your own thinking, taking advantage, of course, of all assistance derivable from the best thoughts of other men, but forming your own conclusions on the facts really given to you; and to do this on all the great questions of existence. You are invited to remember the responsibility which rests upon you because of the fact that you are capable of thinking at all, and to observe always the truth: That while you may not be able to come at the actual facts involved in some investigations, for various reasons, if your attitude is that which these pages seek to develop, you will, notwithstanding much ignorance in many fields, be in control of your own mental powers,

and will accomplish better results, *with* that ignorance and that attitude of independence, than by following the lead and authority of others on any subject whatever.

Seventh Cause Superior — *Lack of Clear Thought-Processes and Thought-Products.* This cause of superstition has been sufficiently discussed in preceding paragraphs, and demands here no further attention, except to indicate that such processes and products must inevitably destroy superstition and banish fear due thereto, if the other factors of our remedies are observed as directed.

Eighth Cause Superior — *The Reign of Fear-Thought Inspiring Fear-Feeling.* Not only fear-thought, but also fear-feeling, has always been in the world, because man has from the first had before him the gigantic tasks of conquering Nature and of unfolding himself. The desire to explain and the desire for welfare peopled Nature in the beginning with existences which, whether friendly or hostile, only inspired fear lest the friendly gods should be offended and the hostile demons should not be placated. Inevitably, then, arose fear of calling in question any fact, proposition, or event supposed to be "sacred," and so, also, fear of omitting any rite, ceremony or practice which had come to be relied upon as promising welfare. This attitude of fear still obtains, more or less, and superstition as a mental condition continues for that reason. Even the truth comes next to be regarded as a subject to be afraid of. The scientist, the theologian, the common man, fears humanity's greatest friend, because each is not quite sure that he has truth and has never learned to rely absolutely upon himself as a determiner of truth. Only as people form a just conception of

the Infinite and a truly moral idea of their relation to the Infinite, can they perceive that the *individual must find the truth in himself*, and only in himself, and that such truth alone can "please" that Infinite. We perpetuate the most dangerous thing in the world — dangerous to ourselves and dangerous to the Infinite — when we cease from or hinder free and honest thinking. Any other attitude means a world swamped in superstition and error. Our regime thus appears to be very simple.

Regime: *Fearless Friendship with Truth.* You are invited to accept this proposition: *Knowledge of actual truth can work no man harm in a Universe of intelligence and law.* If your God is one who would condemn you for standing out for what you believe to be truth, having honestly sought to discover truth, you are urged to *get a new God.* The real Deity of this Universe assumes no such attitude toward men. You are invited to make reasonably sure that your "truth" is the real thing, but also to remember that the process of searching for truth must necessarily entail many mistakes on our part, which mistakes are nevertheless a phase of the cost of freedom and the growing mind. And you are invited, above all, to become so familiar with the idea of *truth as your particular friend* that no fear of the discovery of any of its secrets can possibly prevail in your mind because you are entirely conscious of utter honesty in all your convictions.

Ninth Cause Superior — *The Dynamic Idea.* Many people who profess to be wholly free from superstition indulge, nevertheless, in various superstitious practices or omissions, because certain ideas occur to them and become dynamic or ruling. Thus, it is said that one of the best Presidents the United States has

had habitually refused to sign public documents on Fridays. The Friday-idea had become with him dynamic — a ruler — a cause of inaction, or refusal to act. The explanation of this inconsistency is seen in the working of what is here called the dynamic idea. An idea is dynamic when it immediately precedes and induces action, either of body or mind. Thus, the idea, "Friday is unlucky," or the idea, "thirteen is an evil number," may come to rule over the mind when reason distinctly knows better. The dynamic idea — of any sort — hurries us into action, or inhibits action, by automatic working of the mental machinery.

Regime: *Checking the Dynamic Idea.* You have heard of all sorts of superstitious notions during your life, and when any circumstance or event of a nature suggestive of some superstitious act, practice or omission occurs in your experience, you feel an impulse to do or not to do, accordingly. You yield to such impulse unconsciously, and the act — positive or negative — follows automatically. In fact, a sort of habit grows up in the mind by which you are started off in harmony with the superstition the moment a favorable suggestion comes to attention. The remedy consists in doing or in refusing to do precisely the thing suggested — *because* it belongs to the list of *superstitious* things. The moment the suggestion is felt, it is checked: the act is performed or it is not performed, always *against* the suggestion and habit. You begin important enterprises on Fridays, dine with thirteen at table, wear opals, disbelieve various "sacred" stories, and so on, and so on, from sheer obstinate pugnacity against superstition and bravado of fate — because you really know that in this Universe all events are due to the working of the great law of cause and effect. You know better

than superstitious practices indicate: now you propose to act up to the level of your intelligence. In this way you destroy the habit referred to and you develop mental freedom from the suggestions of superstition and mental sanity in regard to the conduct of your life.

LET REASON BREAK ITS SLUMBER.

Once gushed from mountain depths a crystal stream
And in a granite basin paused to dream.

Then round its passive spirit swiftly crept
All fearful things, for day's fair use inept,
Reflecting in its dark and troubled face
Ill-shapes a-trooping to their proper place,
Till e'en the forest shivered in the gloom
And wandering breezes croaked of death and doom.

The stream a-sudden wakened and o'erflowed
Its granite basin; leaped and flashed and glowed
With sparkling beauty and imprisoned light,
Singing a song of power in its flight
Down to the Sea, its Mother, loved of Air;
And, high upon the mountain's summit, where
Erstwhile had imaged in the sleeping pool
All phantoms of dread Superstition's school,
Looked forth enow the great lords of the sky
And earth's good kin — what things may move or fly —
The sure realities of Wisdom's Thought,
By Life conceived, for life's high purpose wrought.

The meaning of the parable is this:
In reason's dreaming lives the soul amiss —
With phantoms it reflects and yet creates,
The panorama of disease and fates.

Let reason break its slumber, act, and find,
In quest of welfare, freedom for the mind:
Lo, still encircled by its primal Source,
The deeper soul reports all truth, perforce;
For, 'tis but self of Self forth manifest,
The All within the active one expressed.

— The Author

CHAPTER XV.

Varieties of Superstition.

"Behold a matter on which there is no room for doubt, and that is, that the plague, fevers, and other diseases are the work of the devil."— *Luther.*

IT should not be assumed that the examples of superstition now to be given are confined to the ranks of the ignorant, for some of the most notable people disclose the weakness. The word, "common," then, has regard in this connection merely to the fact that the specimens named are found almost anywhere in any community. Space forbids, of course, a listing of even the current sayings which are familiar to all, but a few illustrations will be noted, showing the absurdity of the whole class. Thus, we have:

Some Examples of Common Superstitions.

Finding whole cast-off horseshoes is "lucky." * * * Show not the marriage license to a friend. * * * Do not look at the new moon over your left shoulder. * * * Plant your garden in the full of the moon. * * * Horse chestnuts, carried in the pocket, prevent rheumatism. * * * Carry an old coin about with you "for luck." * * * Yellow is "unlucky" on the stage. * * * An actor should never wear a moonstone. * * * Hounds baying at the moon portend death. * * * If you speak of your good health, rap on wood. * * * The beryl reveals the future. * * * Pearls mean successful business. * * * The thirteenth of the month is "un-

lucky." * * * Friday is always "unlucky" for new things. * * * Blow through the card-pack when shuffling. * * * Make not less than four slices of toast at once. * * * Spilling salt or pepper portends a quarrel. * * * It is "unlucky" to give away a present. * * * Dip off and drink coffee-bubbles "for money." * * * If your ears "burn," some one is speaking of you. * * * Never point at the moon. * * * If you see a pin on the floor, pick it up "for luck." And so on through a list which would exhaust a volume. If we pass from proverbs to curious obsessions, we have the following:

It is said that a Wall Street broker and banker always insisted that the barber should shave his right cheek first and make the initial stroke upward, "for luck." A mother required that her new-born babe be carried up stairs or out of doors before being taken down stairs, so that it might surely "go up in the world." The superstition about the number thirteen is said to date back to the Last Supper, at which thirteen sat down to table. A President of the United States refused to make appointments and to sign documents on a Friday. The Iron Ruler of Germany, Bismarck, felt that the number three was a "lucky" number. The cat exercised an evil influence over England's great queen. A black cat in a would-be host's house prevents an English lord's acceptance of an invitation to that house. One of the greatest of actresses insisted that no cat should be allowed in the theatre where she had an engagement. A notable French novelist imagined that a bit of coral would act as a talisman against fire, thunder and flood, and that a bloodstone could make him wise and courageous. The ruler of all the Russias must wear, on rising in the morning,

a ring set with a piece of the "true cross." The left hind foot of a graveyard rabbit, killed in the light of the moon, is regarded as "good luck" by many theatrical people. Thousands of married women fear to take off their wedding-ring because this token is supposed to be included in the vow, "until death us do part."

From such exhibitions of trivial mentality we turn to the fields of thought with expectation of better things. But we again learn the truth that greatness of mind does not necessarily signify freedom and sanity in thinking, as the examples given clearly indicate.

Some of the Greater Superstitions.

A "cloud of witnesses" here confront us, only a brief cursory examination of which our space and purpose permit. A hasty survey of the "greater superstitions" shows that the "lesser, common" kind are merely imitations of their "betters." As peasants ape the manners of kings, so "thirteens" and "Fridays" ape the royal fictions of science and theology. The same order of brain that has evolved superstitions concerning horseshoes and opals, has evolved the larger varieties that relate to the cure of disease by dead drugs, the origin of worlds without intelligence, and the reform of a Universe through endless torment. A belief is no less superstitious for springing from Jove's head and wearing the livery of the gods. You are invited, then, to examine the following illustrations.

First Illustration of Superior Superstitions: *Disease and Drugs.* "The history of medicine is little else than an incredible narrative of the substitution of fiction for facts; the converts to an hypothesis (and every — the most contradictory — doctrine has had its day)

regularly *seeing* and *reporting only in conformity with its dictates.*" "If you open early medical books, you will find sympathetic magic invoked on every page," and the word "early" does not discriminate in favor of present times when a medical writer can say: "The disgrace of medicine has been the colossal system of self-deception, in obedience to which mines have been emptied of their cankering minerals, the vegetable kingdom robbed of all its noxious growths, the entrails of animals taxed for their impurities, the poison-bags of reptiles drained of their venom, and all the inconceivable abominations thus obtained thrust down the throats of human beings suffering from some fault of organization, nourishment or vital stimulation." "Drug therapy has kept up its prestige in the eyes of practitioners and the public for a long time. Nevertheless since the days of antiquity it has been intimated that we are like the augurs who could not think of themselves without laughing; we are sometimes accused of lying like tooth-pullers. We hear old, experienced practitioners say to their younger brothers: 'Hurry up and use this medicine while it is still efficacious.' One of them, and one of the most distinguished, too, said: 'We never take medicines ourselves; we sometimes give it to our friends, and always to our patients.' We possess a few rare specifics which cure, and numerous palliatives, but this useful pharmacy is small. These will be found in the medicine chest of the practicing physician in the form of a few compressed tablets or alkaloids. The most celebrated physicians have recognized the inadequacy of our medical materials, of which we may well say: 'There are many, but not of much use.'" "Some hope for everything from the use of natural forces, such as mechanotherapy, scienti-

fically studied hydrotherapy, phototherapy, electricity, and radio-therapy. This new error is as fatal as the first: it is only replacing one superstition by another. Physical agents, such as temperature, light, air, and the various radiations, can act favorably on the health in natural conditions. When, in order to use them in behalf of patients, we concentrate their action, we can derive some profit from them by employing them as palliatives, but the more we concentrate them, and the more we localize their action, the more destructive they become."

Thus speak the "regular" physicians. We conclude that the efficacy of the few drugs recognized as of value in the profession must be referred, from the viewpoint of the physicians themselves, to some mechanical action in retarding excessive or increasing retarded function — which leaves the notion of some mysterious curative power in the drugs a pure superstition, since Nature alone can take advantage of the induced increased or retarded action. Referring the actual cure to Nature, then, we have the following outcome:

A drug is a chemical compound. If it contains a true-food element, that element is used by Nature as is any other food-element.

If the remaining elements act mechanically, Nature either takes advantage of (and, of course, causes) the action, or is compelled to oppose it.

If part or all of the drug is treated by Nature as mere waste material, Nature is by so much burdened with the process of elimination.

A chemical compound can accomplish no more in the living body than effect a chemical reaction with tissue.

If the tissue were outside the body, precisely the same reaction would occur--- *except* for the one factor: *condition of life.*

It is the life-condition in tissue, then, which gives Nature its opportunity in the body.

In the individual human, Nature is the self, and the self *phases* in the living condition.

If we say that the self is the merely sum-total of living conditions (all is material), the *whole living-condition self* becomes a *third thing* between drugs and any tissue. The efficacy of the drug depends on this *third thing.*

If we say that the self is really an *existence* within the body, which has built the body, which has brought it to a diseased condition through ignorance or wilful violation of law, this *non-material self* becomes the *third thing above suggested.*

In either case the *indispensable operator is the self* — otherwise a drug can accomplish *more* than bring about a chemical reaction. But the reaction of chemicals within the body is certainly different in some manner from reaction of chemicals outside the body — otherwise whence the curing or the injury from drugs?

If the third factor, the self, is the indispensable *director* of the chemical reaction, it is so because direction has been *induced.*

This induced direction of the use (one way or another) of drugs within the body, is an action of the self which may be called *suggestion.*

Drugs, therefore, *inspire suggestion in the third factor*, the self. They are means of suggestion. From the earliest times it has been believed that the introduction of substances into diseased bodies is helpful,— the belief arising from a natural desire to assist the body

in such condition,— and this practice has developed suggestion in the subconscious self accordingly. We now conclude:

He who cannot originate auto-suggestion for curative purposes *without* medicines should give himself the advantage of *means* to suggestion afforded by his physician.

But to remain in this helpless condition for ordinary ills, is childish. "I show unto you a more perfect way" in the volumes companioning with this.

When physical conditions are such that adequate auto-suggestion is beyond us, the physician is, again, in order. Let us not demand to-day, *for now,* the final results of evolution. The age is approaching when the human psychic will surely have achieved mastery over disease and death. Meanwhile, each of us must, and can only, call upon the power which he actually possesses and can develop by use.

But if drugs *can* suggest (as they certainly do) curative activity of the self, — whether this be a sum-total of physical conditions or a real psychic factor,— it is truth and law that the self may *dispense with drugs and independently originate such suggestion as can prove efficacious in any event.* Drug-suggestion sometimes fails, we know. Independent psychic suggestion merits no greater responsibility placed upon it by an opposing theory. Such greater and true responsibility will only appear when the self attains,— as it may, to a degree,— a greater freedom and power.

Invitation. You are invited, then, resolutely to cultivate courage to banish the superstition of any *mystery-power in drugs,* to fear not the sane use of a physician as a *means to auto-suggestion* when common sense calls for such aid, but to fear not, as well,

recourse to your own deific powers in all the ordinary conditions of life. And even in the presence of the physician, rely not, primarily, on him; rely mightily on your self, the mighty. Thou art the king!

Second Illustration of Superior Superstitions: *In the Field of Science.* The desire to explain gives us science. Science is a product of the human mind,— nothing more,— precisely as is art, or government, or theology. As theology came in time to look upon itself as in itself a kind of superior entity, a something that was a little more than human, and, therefore, never to be questioned, so science has actually conceived of itself as an existence apart from its servants, scientific men, and not for a moment to be questioned.

That is to say: many theologians and scientists imagine their respective subjects to be authoritative entities which other common minds may not in the least call in question.

This scientific notion is pure superstition. Following the methods that have led to it, we may give to all the great words in our modern life a similar sanctity and authority. Thus we may construct a kind of new mythology, as, for example:

"Theology-God," * * * "Religion-God," * * * "Providence-God," * * * "Humanity-God," * * * "Civilization-God," * * * "Life-God," * * * "Government-God," * * * "Art-God," * * * "Industry-God," * * * "Science-God," * * * "Force-God," * * * "Law-God," * * * "Mind-God," * * * "Thought-God," * * * "Will-God," * * * "Substance-God," * * * "Monad-God," * * * "Atom-God," * * * etc., etc., etc.,

We have created these "gods" as the ancients created Jove, Juno, Vulcan, Mercury, and so on. In

each case the words stand for general concepts and have no existence apart from human thinkers. The modern "gods" are thought-products based upon large observation of individual realities. They exist only as man exists and thinks. Their authority is his authority; their weakness is his weakness. There is, for example, no *humanity* apart from men and women, and no *civilization* apart from individual human ways of being and doing now existent. So, also, *life* is, only as things live. *Mind*, again, is nothing other than a sum-total of the activities of the self continuing through a "now." *Thought* is the meaning of such activities, which vanishes when thinking ceases. *Force* exists only as something acts. If all action were to cease, no force could remain. *Will* is dynamic idea — idea inducing action. *Law* is a way a thing has of being and doing,— as we conclude from our observation,— hence, in this sense, is merely our formulated opinion. The *nature of things* is that which expresses in such ways of being and doing. The *World-Nature* that *we* know, *as* we know it, is a complex concept of our thought. This is the final conclusion, also, in regard to Deity. Nature and Deity exist independently of our thinking; but *as we know them* they are concepts which we create by thinking them.

The mysterious authority of science, then, disappears. Science, theology, religion, have *in themselves* no authority whatever. The only authority of science that we can recognize is that of its content of truth, and this truth can become authority to each mind only as that mind makes the truth its own, that is, recreates such truth by thinking it through to acceptance.

When we obtain this point of view, we see that the so-called authority of science *as science* is simply

a superstition. The view-point disposes of a number of associated superstitions, as follows:

The Superstition of Natural Law. There probably is such a thing somewhere as "natural law," but no one has ever visualized it, smelt it, touched it, tasted it, heard it. We come to believe in "natural laws" by a process of induction, but the induction is our own thinking solely, and the "laws" are our formulated thoughts — solely, so far as we *clearly* know. Things have *some ways of being and doing*, and when we have observed the doing sufficiently, we give our opinion about the ways, calling the opinions, "laws." Then we forget the process of mental creation, and imagine that the "laws" go of themselves; finally, we say: "All things are *governed* by law." The truth is precisely the opposite: *all "laws" are governed by things.*

Invitation. You are, therefore, invited to discriminate between the actual ways of Nature actually operative were humanity utterly non-existent, and all the so-called "natural laws," which are simply conclusion-formulæ in scientific thinking, and to have the courage to decline the *authority* of scientific or any other "laws" until you have thought the formulæ — the "laws"— through to personal acceptance. This means, of course, declination and thinking-through when your mental freedom requires, not a refusal of the "laws" for ordinary practical purposes.

The Superstition of Physiological Psychology. This superstition holds that human consciousness is simply the sum-total of present physical activities *among brain-cells.* The physical activities constitute a changing system which is the now-person, just as an electric light-sign is a system of changing now-lights. Were all the *physical* activities to cease, there would be, not

only no consciousness, but no person. The person is the *physical* system.

We conclude, then, according to this theory, that a system of activities can exist with no other basis than itself as a sum-total.

But the system is a sum-total of activities. Its only basis is the sum-totality of itself. The only actors are the activities. Isolated, then, each activity is its own cause. The effect is the cause. There is no difference between cause and effect. Hence the cause is the effect. The effect-activity is the cause-activity. Each activity is the whole system. The sum-total is the part. The part is the sum-total. An action is possible without an actor. An action is actor. So fares the theory.

The notion of the self as a mere sum-total of activities — of *any* kind — is superstition, because it violates the first law of human thinking: self-identity. The self can only hold to self-identity as it conceives itself to be, in the way of existence, independent of its activities.

This disposes as well of the "mental science" superstition of separately-existing "mental faculties," such as consciousness, will, imagination, and so on. There are no such things as separately-existing mental faculties. The mental faculties simply represent certain regularly established *psychic* activities of the self. They might all be banished, and the self would still remain; or rather, the self would proceed to re-establish them, just as, beginning with the simplest animal organism in evolution, the animal psychic factor has actually done.

Invitation. You are invited, now, to think of your self as a *psychic* reality expressing in body and nervous system and brain, and to have the courage to assert

self as *master* of all activities within the personal system, supreme in the realm of psychology because you are the sole creator of that realm, so far as it has existence to you.

The Superstition of Origins. The following propositions are suggested as unimpeachable:

It is *always legitimate* to divide our personal field of thought, giving attention, now to one, now to another, and to hold that propositions accepted as truth because sufficiently demonstrated in a *given* department may not always be accepted as truth in a different department for the reason that the thought-methods of the latter do not permit such demonstration. In mathematics, for example, we can demonstrate an algebraic equation, but not a theorem of æsthetics in art.

It is *never legitimate* to divide our field of thought and, proceeding to give attention to *one* department, to deny or call in question propositions of *another* department which are demonstrable therein only and because they are not demonstrable in the former. This attitude disregards the law that every truth has its own law and must be demonstrated by its own methods. It violates, further, the greater law of mental wholeness. The scientific man, for example, who contends that in his *science-field* of thought there is no possible demonstration of a First Cause of the Universe, takes a legitimate stand because his field-methods are observation and induction (which cannot apply to a First Cause), and his science, therefore, is altogether inadequate. But for the very reason that this man is scientific, he is precluded from denying the demonstrableness of a First Cause in *some other* field of human thought.

It is *totally illegitimate*, from the standpoint of the wholeness of mind, to confine attention to any one de-

partment of thought, and, because propositions in other departments can only be demonstrated through their own methods,— and not, in the modern scientific way, observation with induction,—to affirm that such propositions are "not proven," or "cannot be proven," that is, in science, and, therefore, are not worthy of consideration and investigation by appropriate methods since such methods are not "scientific." This is equivalent to denying everything in optics not demonstrable in music.

And it is *especially illegitimate,* from the standpoint of the wholeness of mind, for the scientist to *refuse attention* to some department of thought merely because it is not what he calls "scientific." This attitude disregards, again, the law of mental wholeness, courting contentment in partial mentality by a being whose supremest obligation urges effort toward completeness of the mental life.

It is, *above all, illegitimate* to hold that any department of human thought is *superior,* so far as truth is concerned, to any other department. There is nothing in science to give it preëminence in human thinking. It is not uncommon for scientists to regard with contempt the fields of philosophy and metaphysics. But this is error, especially since no branch of science can dispense with metaphysics.

It is *equally illegitimate* and error to hold that the methods of science — observation and induction — are the *only* valid and trustworthy methods for acquiring *real knowledge.* Knowledge is merely the certainty that our conceptions correspond to reality. Any method, therefore, which lands us in certainty is valid and trustworthy. Alongside of observation and induction we must place deduction and intuition as

legitimate processes of knowing. True, we must test these processes by experience; but if we cannot deduce and intuit, we can never raise experience to higher levels. And, after all observation of a series of phenomena, we see that the *induction* — drawing-forth of the conclusion from the observed facts — is an *intuition* of the mind because of its nature, perfectly fitting in with the fact that we are incapable of infinite observation, but are driven to inference, notwithstanding. The primary fact at work here is, not that we cannot escape the conclusion, but that our *minds are so constituted* that we cannot escape the conclusion *up to the present stage of investigation.* It is really a strange thing that, since apples always have, in our own experience, fallen from the trees, we *intuitively* conclude that they will continue always to fall. The only reason we can give for the conclusion is the *nature of mind.* We do not *know* about *all* apples in *all* times. Nevertheless, we proceed to affirm a "law of gravity." Science *intuitively* concluded that the notion of transmutation of metals was unscientific superstition. The same nature of mind compels it *now* to accept the derivation of helium from radium, and to *intuit* a theory of the "disintegration of matter."

We therefore conclude that the claim of the superiority of science for itself as a field of thought, and for its methods as means to knowledge, is a two-fold superstition.

We also conclude that *all* methods of thought leading to reasonable certainty in regard to any proposition, in addition to those of scientific observation and induction, are to be accepted as valid and trustworthy.

We also conclude that, while the origin of the Universe from a First Cause does *not* properly come

within the field of the scientist's partial mentality, it certainly *does* come within the field of the whole human mind, and especially if that idea of First Cause has a bearing upon our practical life, character and destiny.

We also conclude that the question of a First Cause must be answered, if at all, in accordance with the *highest known law of the human mind.* This law may be stated as follows:

Since all fields of human thought are creations of the human mind based upon life and experience in an actual Universe, we are driven to interpret that Universe — form our opinions about it — *in terms of the realest and highest factors of our own existence,* conceiving such factors, as, indeed, we do when we conceive of them correctly, as in nature unlimited.

The *realest* factor of our existence is consciousness, and the *highest* factor is intelligent will. The will analyzes into *dynamic idea* — any idea causing or inducing deliberated action. Such idea involves other ideas for, and as constituting, deliberation. The process means the life of thought.

If we proceed to interpret the Universe in accordance with the law suggested, that is, in terms of the realest and highest within ourselves, that is, in terms of consciousness, will, thought, we shall see that the System in which we live is a Thought-System wrought by an Infinite Thinker which in essence is Intelligent Conscious Will. Such an answer to our question of origins I hold to be legitimate, adequate and comprehensive, appealing both to observation and induction as concerns facts and to intuition as concerns interpretation. And I hold especially that such an answer appeals to the wholeness of human mind.

Over against this conception come the "gods" of science. The ancient Aryans brought forth *Agni,* "the Fire," and *Veruna,* "the Bright Sky," and other "natural" deities; the Egyptians, *Ra;* the Assyrians, *Ashur,* the Greeks, *Jove;* the Romans, *Jupiter.* But the Hindus said: "Thou art *That,*"— Brahma was *That,* "one without a second," pure Being. The Israelites rose once to the altitude of "*I am That I Am.*" In these last cases the human mind interpreted in terms of its own highest and realest in the unlimited sense. Around this mighty conception, but on levels far below, cluster all the Gods of superstition.

And the "gods" of a scientific" superstition reveal no greater dignity than the mythic gods of antiquity. There is the "god of *law*" which turns out to be human opinion. There is a "god of *force,*" which demands a prior creating god, and so, falls. There is the "god of *inertia,*" which is only conceivable in an existing System after the latter's establishment, and thus requires initiation and an intitiator. There is the "god of *matter,*" which cannot exist without force, as force is said not to exist without matter, yet which now turns out to be electricity — a kind of force. There is the "god of *electricity,*" which must be supported by the ether and cannot become without generation and a generator. There is the "god of the *ether,*" which is *assumed* for explanation (more or less demonstrated by the facts — which is strangely enough not admitted by science to be possible for a real Deity), yet is denied intelligence and will. There is the "god-*Monad,*" which is really one of an infinite number of little gods which require a progenitor. There is the "god-*Absolute,*" which has no power to create a Universe since it would in creation cease to be absolute because of

relations to worlds. There is the "god-*Unknowable*," which, therefore, may not be affirmed.

Invitation. You are invited to remember that science is the *creation* of man's mind, not its *master*, and to have the courage to insist that the so-called laws of science be demonstrated in your own thought so far as they concern your practical life, and especially to stand in all your mental experience for the *whole* of that mind which is yours, valid and trustworthy in its wholeness for *all fields* of thought and *all methods* of those fields — observation, induction, intuition, workings conscious and workings subconscious. For always, in any field, your conclusions will be saner and truer for the reason that you have employed all methods applicable and have brought to all your thinking the whole rather than a section of your mind's power.

Third Illustration of Superior Superstition: *In the Field of Theology.* This subject will receive consideration in the following chapters. Our present concern is mainly the general ground-reason for uncritical belief. Superstitions in theology prevail because of false notions relating to "sacred" literature, to Deity, and to human destiny. In these notions we have many pure assumptions.

It is *assumed* (practically) that Bible, theological systems and creeds are either of such divine origin or so authoritatively true as to be wholly superior to criticism or question.

It is *assumed* that a certain fixed idea of Deity set forth in the "sacred" literature is wholly true, and that no new idea can be true unless it means practically the same as this fixed conception.

It is *assumed* that human destiny depends upon an attitude toward various statements of belief rather

than upon conformity to the laws of the Universe; or, that the necessary conformity can only be secured through acceptance of the beliefs.

These positions are superstition and error, because they issue from superstitious thinking. We observe, then —

1. All bibles, all theologies and all creeds are products of human evolution. Man is endowed with a mighty instinct for welfare-truth, because his existence grounds in that of the Infinite. Man is, therefore, always in touch with the Infinite. The Infinite always moves within him to inspire his mind to welfare-truth thought. This is the impelling cause of evolution toward truth and welfare. But the human mind, because it is *always in a process of evolution,* is therefore always *limited in perception and understanding,* and interprets the Universe and the Infinite's movements within (the mind) in terms of a degree of ignorance as well as a degree of knowledge. The final outcome of these coöperating factors is *always a mixture of truth and error.* The same process leads to the same results in art and science.

There is absolutely one way only in which man can interpret the Infinite: by thinking both the things interpreted and the interpretation. If man receives a "revelation," he receives it by thinking it. No alternative way is conceivable.

All bibles, theologies and creeds, therefore, are in this sense man-made. They may, or they may not, be made by man on his own initiative, but even on the Infinite's initiative, they are thought, spoken, written by man.

All bibles, theologies and creeds contain, let us concede, a measure of truth (in some cases more, in

some cases less), but also a measure of error (in some cases less, in some cases more).

To hold that any bible, any theology, any creed is all truth and no error is to hold a superstition.

2. When you read the "sacred" literature, you *think* its propositions. Your thinking is your own in that case, and depends upon *what you are:* your hereditary make-up, your training, your body of present thought, your brain-cells and their present condition; — so depends *altogether* if you do not take this matter into your voluntary control. Your thinking being your own in the sense indicated, you cannot possibly think any proposition read or heard — cannot interpret it — precisely as any other person may think or interpret the same. Hence, no set of people, no societies, no churches, can ever succeed in bringing you *identically* to their interpretations or thought on any subject whatever. Hence, again, you must yourself, for and within yourself, *find your own truth, and determine what is error to you, in any bible, theology or creed in the world.*

The notion that any human being can determine truth or error for any other human being is superstition.

There are many superstitions in religions, but the greatest is the notion that any book, theology or creed can have authority for any mind other than that of the truth made that mind's own by its own sincere and free thinking; and the next greatest superstition is the notion that a human mind can "sin" by declining to accept on such authority any proposition not validified by its own thinking. The "sin" originates, rather, in accepting as truth propositions supposed to be necessary to welfare set forth in bibles, theologies and creeds, which your own mind has not made its own.

There are many superstitious beliefs in the world of theology, but the most superstitious is the belief that any person's beliefs must be conformed to any standards exterior to his own earnest, intelligent, independent thinking. And the test of that kind of thinking is the freest best that a mind can do.

3. Since truth is truth to the individual only when he makes it his own by thinking it through to acceptance, since our welfare depends upon truth thus realized and honestly worked into our life and character, the sincere search for truth can never be legitimately regarded as dangerous in the sense that any true Deity can condemn the searcher for his quest or for the beliefs that result as the search proceeds, and during their life.

The notion that the "wrath of the Infinite" can be incurred by declining or failing to believe in any standard set up by men because it *is* "standard," and the notion that the same "wrath" can arise when one sincerely believes, after an honest quest for truth, various propositions contrary to such "standards," are superstitions because they issue from uncritical thinking and stand in defence of an unworthy God. A churchwoman was heard to say: "Always have I felt that I could not believe those things literally, but always have I feared to believe otherwise." Her beliefs, then, were superstitions, and her God was irrational.

4. Without going into the matter of the will to believe,— which is not properly in place here, beyond the statement that one can only will to believe the truth by willing to seek and to accept the evidences of truth, — the fact is, that the *goal of religion* is not belief, — not an attitude toward theological propositions,—

but is *normal character.* Normal character is the sum-total of good qualities — that is, qualities which *conserve and develop the individual toward his best.* Such qualities are results of right relations (conserving and developing relations) toward man, the Universe and the Infinite. These relations are right when they make for the best of the individual, other humans, and the Universe. It is often said that action is the product of belief. The greater truth is the opposite: Belief is the product of conduct. But right conduct expresses your relation with, your attitude toward, your self for its best, your fellows for their best, the Universe growing to its best. When your attitude is such, you will conserve the interests of the Infinite so far forth. You will then show forth the finest kind of faith, and you will, infallibly, believe in some kind of God, some sort of effort on the part of the Infinite in your behalf and in behalf of all others, and you will then surely believe in an unseen spiritual realm wherein you are to work out your destiny, here and hereafter, through the continued maintenance of such attitude.

Speaking bye-and-large, this general attitude represents all beliefs that are essential to human welfare — in my opinion. The goal of religion is character. To character, motives are of primary importance, and particular beliefs, though inevitable, are incidental only. The honest searcher for truth will infallibly entertain some beliefs, but the details thereof must be decided in the sacred court of what the inner self really is.

It is superstition that religion essentially means avoiding wrath, winning favor, escaping hell, securing heaven, accepting a "sacrifice," being "ransomed" by

a "sacrifice,"— other than in the sense of coöperating with the Infinite for good character.

Let us understand. The highest quest of man is the effort to know welfare-truth. This quest can never displease a real God, can never harm a sincere human being for long — nor essentially at all. The quest may involve mistakes, but mistakes are a part of the price of liberty,— always indispensable to character,— and in the long run will lead to truth. The quest for welfare-truth involves the doing of righteousness. Righteousness is *right-wiseness:* right-wiseness toward self, toward others, toward the Universe, and so, toward the Infinite. Right-wiseness is wisdom,— necessarily more or less imperfect in human beings,— wisdom of thought and conduct which tends toward harmony within self and with others, the Universe and the Infinite, and *harmony is a state of being which is called for by the nature of the being.* Such right-wiseness may entail more or less error from time to time, but the right intention will always maintain the integrity of the individual,— which is the main thing,— and, assisting more and more to the discovery of welfare-truth, will finally win through to the supreme goal — goodness of character, a state of being which is called for by the nature of the being.

5. It is thus evident that "rewards" and "punishments" can never be imposed where they do not belong, can never result from other than character, and can never exist save within the individual. All "rewards" and all "punishments," not only as thoughts but as facts, are creations by the individual within himself. They illustrate the eternal *law of cause and effect.*

The notions of "heaven" and "hell" conceived as arbitrary establishments preserved forever by contin-

uous divine fiat rather than by self-wrought and self-sustained conditions of character, are superstitions because they represent impossibilities and an unrighteous Deity,.

6. In trying to form some idea of Deity, we are driven as already suggested, to think in terms of the highest and realest in ourselves, *unlimited*, to-wit: consciousness, will, thought—*unlimited*. These factors constitute us persons, We therefore think of the Infinite as Person. But the word "person" is here merely a symbol; the moment we limit the symbol by observed *human* details, that moment we land in superstition concerning a Personal Infinite. The result need not follow. The word person in the human sense is also symbolic: the factors, consciousness, will, thought, when we examine them in ourselves, fade away into realities which we *cannot fathom, cannot describe;* are *to* our powers, *unlimited*. Let us affirm that in the Infinite these realities or factors are, not merely to *our powers*, but *actually, unlimited*. The Infinite is person, but only in some adequately indescribable and incomprehensible way. Thus, the words, "Deity," "God," "Infinite," and so on, are all symbols for the One Basic Reality which is Infinite Intelligence — "One without a second."

The Infinite is *Person-Ideal*. The Universe is its Thought-System. The Thought-System is now working out "toward one far-off, divine event" of *completeness*. The factors that must infallibly make toward that event are the honest search for truth and the personal attitude of right-wiseness on the part of every intelligence. Such a Person-Ideal, seeking *through* worlds such a goal *for* worlds, has no wrath for fearless thinking, sincere seeking, genuine good character,

but, I must believe, only the smile of approval — that smile which paints the violet, gilds the dawn, reveals in the face of motherhood.

7. The goal of the Universe being self-completeness, the methods which alone can operate therefore are the methods of what we call *Universal Law.* No one should become bondsman to *human opinion* on what this or the other law is, but every sane man knows that welfare issues from conformity to the real laws that are — so far as we can make them out. We think, then, of two sets of laws: those which are merely our stating of the ways *things seem* to have of being and doing; and those which *are* the *actual* ways *things have* of being and doing.

Sanity declares that the Universe has regular established ways of being and doing. Let us call these ways the laws of the Universe: *of,* not *for* the Universe. We see, then, that it is not true that the Universe is governed *by* law (unless we mean, by an Infinite Will — sane, orderly, perfect, requiring no variation), but that it *is* true that the Universe in its ways of being and doing *expresses* its laws. If the laws express the ways of being and doing, the laws are *universal,* since the ways are so, and, if universal, are *uniform,* and never capricious, since the universal ways apply to all things appropriately or when called for. Their working is, consequently, general only in uniformity, and particular only in harmony with universality — in the sense that *anything in which conditions appropriate to their working will infallibly receive the benefit of their working so far as the condition calls for,* no more, no less. On the other hand, any thing, any person, in which the appropriate conditions do not obtain, will fail to receive such benefit, and will entail the opposite results, because the

laws can only particularize through uniformity of their universality.

This general conception outlines what we call "Providence." Providence is the Universe at work in its own general way. If you "get in front" of that way, you suffer. If you condition rightly, that general way — the complex of ways or laws — *particularize* on you for your welfare.

The Universe is not a self-caused, self-moving machine. It is a Thought System now being thought out toward completeness. The goal of its Thinker must be completeness in the System. This involves a design for you — that you come to your best estate, altogether that which your nature calls for. Thus as to all other individuals. That coming to best estate can only be brought about by so much as you and all others condition rightly with reference to the laws, so that these universal ways of being and doing can benefit you — work out in you health, wealth, understanding, spiritual power. Evidently, if you condition wrongly, — contrary to the laws,— the ill that befalls you is no fault of the System, no intention of the Thinker. Evidently, too, all the good you secure in life results from *your* conditioning rightly — according to the intention of the Thinker. The results, one way or the other, are simply part and parcel of the Universe in which we live.

And the deepest, most vital, and most important phase of such right conditions is the *thought-life of your whole selfhood*, just as the supremest power to create such conditions is your ability to think — health or sickness, wealth or poverty, understanding or misconception, spiritual greatness or unspiritual littleness. As you steadfastly and truly *think* these things, so shall it be in your actual life.

It is superstition that the Infinite has favorites among men, or that it gives or withholds capriciously — regardless of the universal ways or laws established once for all. It is superstition that the Infinite is "down on" any human being. It is superstition that one man's life is crowned with good things by special intervention of Deity, while another man's life is poverty-stricken and full of misfortune because of "anger from above" or for the sake of some mysterious discipline regardless of the man's adjustment to law. The Universe is universal and uniform. The Infinite Thinker will only particularize through general laws. The Universe belongs to you no less than to me. It is ours to possess. Our privilege it is to go forth courageously and full of faith, and, by conditioning in with the great methods operating in seed and worlds, things seen and unseen, to claim and to possess our own.

Invitation. You are invited, in harmony with these conceptions, to think fearlessly for yourself in the honest quest for welfare-truth, and, so thinking, to have the courage to believe that you also, no less than others, can find the great laws of health, wealth, understanding and spiritual power and compel them to serve you, even as they have served the most fortunate, for the success that is real here and for all welfare hereafter forever.

Superstitions Distinguished.

But now, if superstitions have always prevailed in the world, and if the reasons therefor which have been given are always at work, and if even some of the most "sacred" things in life turn out to be baseless beliefs, and science itself merely goes on developing new forms, it may be concluded that there is no remedy

either for the state of mind indicated or for its results. The answer is, that the mind may be often in error while wholly free from any superstitious attitude. He who eagerly seeks for the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, may believe in that which afterwards turns out to be false, yet be not superstitious on the level of his own age. On the other hand, one may also *disbelieve* that which afterwards turns out to be truth, yet not be scientific on the level of his own age. There are superstitions that are *actual*, and there are superstitions that are only *apparent*. Examples of the latter class will illustrate the distinction.

It was once conceived that man might transform "base" metals into "superior," and alchemy followed. The modern chemists, who were born of alchemy, scouted this notion as pure superstition — until very recently. The thing was impossible. Yet we now know that practically the transmutation of one element into another has been accomplished. Denial of this fact merely raises the question of what is an element. Experiments with radium disclose, it is said, a series of elements or factors as follows: Uranium, "falling into" intermediate products of "disintegration," and "into" radium, emanation, radium A, radium B, radium C, radium E′, radium E″ radium F (polonium), and radium G (lead?). So, also, for long, some minds called for a demonstration of the evolution of matter, presumably classing the idea as a quasi-superstition. A scientist now writes: "The evolution, or rather devolution, of matter, its continuous change, the generation and destruction of atoms, we know to be going on before our eyes." So, also, the phenomena evoked by Mesmer and Braid were sheer "superstitions" to the scientific men of their day, but hypnotism and

psychotherapy are now regarded as established facts. And, again, there was a time, not far distant, when scientists utterly refused even to examine the alleged facts of spiritism, but we now know that the phenomena in question are in part actual occurrences in Nature, at the least.

We thus see that many beliefs and practices are regarded by some minds as reasonable and by others as superstitious, and that the so-called superstitions of one age may become accredited opinions in another age. We need, therefore, some definite criteria by which we may decide such matters for ourselves, at least with sufficient accuracy to satisfy general purposes. Such criteria are here called for, not so much, however, for the settlement of any particular class of questions, as for the development of courage freely to examine and decide by the exercise of our own thought. It is not important that we should be absolutely free from superstitions, but it *is* important that we should be absolutely free and fearless in all our thinking. Let us try, then, to make out certain principles which may well govern us in the matter in hand.

Criteria for Superstition.

First Criterion — Negative as to Past Experience: *No belief, practice, or experience is to be labelled "superstition" or "truth" merely on the ground that the conditions therefor, and the outcomes, are not now, or cannot now be, duplicated.* It is error, for example, to insist on finding *now* a man living in a whale three days, or a person changing water into wine, and so on. All past life and experiences are dead and gone, and there is no mysterious element in the present by which it is necessarily superior to the past as a sphere of life.

We know nothing for sure about past conditions which are not *in evidence in present results.* Evidence not found in the present cannot be taken negatively against the past. If religious literature of the time of Buddha had recorded the story of radium, scientists one hundred years ago would have cried, "impossible," but this would have been a violation of the present criterion.

Second Criterion — Negative as to Present Understanding: *No alleged experience of the living or the dead is to be labeled "superstition" or "truth" on the ground that we do not understand the matter.* It is error, for example, to declare against life as a factor other than a chemic activity merely because we do not understand such a factor. As a matter of fact, no chemist understands the inner truth of chemical reaction. No physicist understands what electricity is, or the ether, or radio-activity.

Third Criterion — Negative as to Assumed Fact: *No experience is to be labeled "superstition" or "truth" when some fact necessary to the opinion is assumed without proof.* A good many such labels are affixed to ideas because some specific fact is hastily taken for granted. To illustrate: It is assumed that material force is transformed into non-material thought, and, since this is inconceivable, and since matter is assuredly real and tangible, it is concluded that belief in a non-material factor is superstition, and that the self is therefore a system of molecular activities. But the force in question need not be transformed in order to fit the facts: it may merely be "brought into" the brain for the latter's maintenance as an instrument, in a way as electricity is "brought into" a battery; moreover, the brain and the self may both be psychic, the one psychic intelligence, the other psychic mani-

festation of psychic intelligence; in neither case is there a call for transmutation.

FOURTH CRITERION — NEGATIVE AS TO CONCLUSIONS: *No experience is to be labeled "superstition" or "truth" when the labeling opinion is not a reasonably necessary conclusion.* "In the phenomena of mind alone can we be conscious of absolute *certainty*. All *necessity* is, in fact, to us subjective; for a thing is conceived impossible only as we are unable to constitute it in thought. Whatever does not violate the laws of thought" (the basic principles of thinking) "is, therefore, not to us impossible, however firmly we may believe that it will not occur. For example, we hold it absolutely impossible that a thing can begin to be without a cause. Why? Simply because the mind cannot realize to itself the conception of absolute commencement. That a stone should ascend into the air, we firmly believe never will happen; but we find no difficulty in conceiving it possible. Why? Merely because gravitation is only a fact *generalized by induction and observation*, and its negative, therefore, violates no law of thought." The only necessities are those which the nature of mind makes to be so. Such necessities can, with our imperfect mental abilities, be only *reasonably* necessary, because we do not know mind exhaustively. It has been said by many, to return to our criterion, that many persons are able to locate water under ground by walking over the surface with a fork of witch-hazel held in the hands, and certain types of mind instantly scout the whole matter as superstition. The conclusion is not reasonably necessary, since the experience may be truly based on a number of facts, and this possibility calls for investigation before the conclusion can be justified or refuted.

FIFTH CRITERION — POSITIVE AS TO CREDULITY: *All belief is legitimate which bases on the sure conclusions of reason and experience.* "Credulity," from *credo*, "I believe," signifies belief without adequate grounds. The question occurs, then: How are we to distinguish grounds that are adequate? We proceed to answer by indicating certain grounds for belief which may *not* support any contention whatever.

INADEQUATE GROUNDS FOR BELIEF.

1. *The Preconceived Idea.* This may be either positive or negative, but influences opinion to which it is associated by the laws of association, unless the natural tendency is guarded. The preconceived idea tends to become dynamic or ruling for thought, and so, gives mind an attitude corresponding with itself. Hence, we see, or we do not see, as the preconceived idea determines. If my preconception favors wonders, I find wonders to believe in. If the contrary is fact, I refuse to see the plainest matters that are out of the ordinary run of my experience. To believe on the impulse of preconceived idea is *credulity*, and, similarly, to *disbelieve* on the impulse of preconceived idea is *groundless scepticism*, which is merely credulous belief in an opposite direction.

2. *Our Ruling Body of Thought.* This operates to create mental attitudes, just as does the preconceived idea. It is irrational to *believe* merely because a proposition is in harmony with your body of thought, and equally so to disbelieve a proposition simply because it is discordant with the body of thought. Your general complex of thought is worth very little as a deciding factor for matters outside your field of mental activity. The body of thought is what the psychologists would

call, perhaps, the "apperceiving mass." This apperceiving mass it is by which we *interpret new things* as they come along to attention. People of the old, traditional thought always interpret the propositions of the "new thought," when they give them any consideration at all, back into their own thought-products, or down to their old level of thinking. On the other hand, one's body of thought may induce acceptance of a proposition or conclusion that is not at all necessary in the sense here employed. This also is error.

3. *Some Present Dynamic Idea.* This is the Ninth Superior Cause of superstitions mentioned in Chapter XIV, to which reference is made. The dynamic idea can never properly be made a ground for belief, because it does not in itself constitute a reason for any belief — being merely a cause of mental action *in* belief.

4. *The Interest of the Body of Thought.* The body of thought always tends to influence us by its general operation, but it is invariably *favorable* to that which *adds something of its own kind* to the mental stock, and thus, is *hostile* to whatever fails to do so or tends to rob it of its treasures. "Gisbert Voltius urged Marsennus to refute a work of Descartes a year before the book appeared, and before he had himself the means of judging whether the opinions it contained were right or wrong. A certain professor of philosophy in Padua came to Galileo, and requested that he would explain to him the meaning of the term *parrallaxis*, which he wished, he said, to refute, having heard that it was opposed to Aristotle's doctrine touching the relative situation of the planets. 'What,' answered Galileo, 'you wish to controvert a word the meaning of which you do not know?'" A companion of this volume

was returned by a purchaser because he declared the book contradicted the teachings of a favorite author. Always, we see, the body of thought of the individual tends in its own interest to predetermine his judgments.

5. *Self-Interest.* This factor lies at the basis of human life and will capstone its finish. Properly understood, it is the most important consideration of our existence. The pursuit of a true self-interest will lift man at last to his throne and kingdom. But the distinction of a *true* self-interest is the great art of life. When, therefore, we believe or act merely because self-interest so demands, without employing other tests, we are indulging in credulity. Self-interest cannot decide what self-interest is; this must be referred to experience interpreted by enlightened reason. Self-interest, therefore, is alone no basis for believing or disbelieving anything in the world.

6. *Opinions Prevailing in Class or Community.* It is credulous to believe or practice merely because other people of your kind chance to do so. A large percentage of our accepted thought is actually determined in this way. It is for this reason difficult to further the progress of life in any society which is organized on old foundations, as, for example, in colleges, churches, political parties, and the like. Yet the fact of a general concensus of opinion among any class of people whatever is no ground for acceptance of either the new or the old, or for the rejection of the same. Reason, indeed, calls for the opposite attitude, investigation for one's own conviction.

7. *The Line of Least Resistance.* This means that, just as a forest traveler follows the trail, since this is the easiest way, though trails run almost always the longest way, so our beliefs and practices tend to

take the easiest mental track. Such a tendency, coöperating with the dynamic idea and the class-thought or prevailing opinions, preserves credulity and superstition as salt preserves meat. But to believe or disbelieve merely because such involves the smallest mental effort is indolent degradation.

With these matters disposed of, our next step, still dealing with the Fifth Criterion, concerns —

Reason and Reasoning.

The word "reason" is here employed for our general mental powers, including "intuition," while "reasoning" indicates the processes by which we conceive general ideas, form judgments, and draw inferences. The latter word is of narrower scope than the former.

Intuitions are of two orders. The *philosophic intuitions* are the fundamental principles which the nature of mind itself constitutes, and without which we could not think at all. *Psychic intuitions*, as we may well enough call them, signify *ideas appearing in mind for demonstration as facts or truths*, not necessary to the very constitution of mind.

The *philosophic intuitions* may always be put in the form of propositions, and they must be *self-evident*, *necessary* and *universal*. A proposition is self-evident when the mind assents to it the moment it is clearly grasped; necessary when its contrary is inconceivable; universal when it is self-evident and necessary to all normal minds.

None of these statements is true of *ordinary intuitions*. The distinguishing feature in such intuitions is the fact, which should be remembered as a practical guide in our reasoning, that they are ideas or thoughts

that *demand demonstration* as facts or truths. They are never self-evidently, necessarily or universally true: their truth or reality must be made good by experience interpreted by reason and verified by reasoning.

By *reasoning* we form *general notions*, such as "man," "law," "science" and so on; *form judgments*, such as, "Man is animal;" and *draw inferences*, such as, "All matter attracts all matter." We observe several objects and proceed to class them, or put them into a general term. Here is possibility of error, as when we class horseshoe "luck," "miracles" and the "Adam and Eve" story as "superstition." We do not thus form a *true* concept; we make an assumption. Again, we form judgments in reasoning, as when we say, "Person means, like man." Here also is error: person may mean a specific office or work or appearance, as when the king is an official person on the throne, and a private person at his dining-table. A spirit-person might not resemble a man in any respect so far as concerns visible signs. In reasoning we draw inferences, as, "I was ill, took medicine, am now well; therefore the medicine cured me." The conclusion is logical error, however true in fact, since the work of the medicine *in the system* is not demonstrated, and the "cure" might have occurred without the drugs. It is evident that reasoning must be correct if we are to obviate credulity and superstition. Hence, we may indicate certain tests as applicable to trustworthy reasoning, by means of questions, as follows:

Certain Tests for Legitimate Reasoning.

1. Is this conclusion determined by my preconceived idea, by my ruling body of thought, by any present dynamic idea, by my self-interest, or the inter-

est of that body of thought, or by the concensus of opinion in my church, class, community, and so on? If so, the reasoning is *not* conclusive.

2. Is this conclusion *necessary*, in the sense that its contrary is inconceivable? If not, the reasoning is *not yet* conclusive.

3. Is this conclusion *self-evident* under the circumstances, in the sense that any sane mind, possessed of my information, must believe as I believe? If not, the reasoning is *not yet* conclusive.

4. Is this *classification called for* by all the individual objects or propositions which I put under it? Does this object or this proposition belong, as I assume, to this class? If the answer is negative, the reasoning is *not yet* conclusive.

5. Is this judgment really *determined by the actual facts* in the case? If not, the reasoning is *not yet* conclusive.

6. Are the so-called facts *real* facts, and *facts* as I see them; and do I see the *whole* of each fact, and is it a distinct individual fact or a mere jumble of no-facts; and do I see *all* the facts necessary to the conclusion? If the answer is negative, the reasoning is *imperfect.*

7. Do I myself *arbitrarily*, or does the automatic working of mind, draw the inference now in question? Arbitrary reasoning is always *inconclusive.*

Such questions will tend to develop caution, on the one hand, and vigorous investigation, on the other hand, in regard to many credulous beliefs and downright superstitions, as well as in regard to prejudices against certain opinions on the ground that they are superstitions. Moreover, since our superstitions spring so largely from attempts at explanation, we may add the tentative question:

8. Does this (given) explanation *contradict* any fundamental principle of mind? When the Hindu says, "Thou art That," meaning that a man is Brahma (God), but that ignorance obscures the truth, here is violation of reasoning, since the assertion contradicts the validity of consciousness of personal identity. When you believe that the fact of birth under any planet influences your life, this also contradicts a principle, since here are cause and effect conjoined with no natural or logical necessity whatever.

9. If this explanation is true, are any of the laws of thought *destroyed?* When we say that three are one, this (if it be true) destroys the law of identity. Since the laws of thought cannot be destroyed, the statement cannot be true.

10. Is this explanation *double* or *alternative*, but *one-sided?* When we say: "Either Bible prophesies were determined for and before the fulfilment, or the events were determined after and for the prophesies," the reasoning is bad, since possibly the prophesies were not *intended* as prophesies, possibly they were good guesses at the future, possibly the alleged fulfilment was mere interpretation of some one who desired to make out a fulfilment, possibly neither prophesy nor fulfilment were determined, but perhaps each occurred naturally, and the event was foreseen by psychic powers not understood then or now. Possibly such powers exist; but possibly they do not exist. The alternative explanation fails.

11. Does this explanation *alone* account for the facts? If some other explanation is equally applicable and reasonable, the given one fails as a necessary conclusion. You may convince the logical mind by presenting alternative (not one-sided) propositions, but

this does not prove either one of them. If, for example, you "explain" miracles by supernatural power in the worker, there still remains the natural human power possible in any man to do the same things, so that the explanation of supernatural agency falls to the ground. Nothing that Jesus did, for example, can be supernatural if men anywhere who achieve high peculiar development can duplicate his deeds. It is better reasoning to affirm that his miracles were simply manifestations of his completed human nature, than to explain them by supernaturalism, because we to-day perform similar works even with imperfect human nature.

12. Is your explanation based on facts and laws *known* to man, "right down on the ground," or is it founded on *supposed* facts and *unknown* laws? We may explain spiritist phenomena by the supposition of returning dead people, or by the theory of fraud, or by the theory of psychic factor operating among living persons; but good reasoning always insists upon *known natural facts* in preference to *supernatural elements*. Thus —

13. Is your explanation itself *hypothetical?* To explain the unknown by the unknown is not to explain at all; it is, rather, merely to suppose. The "bad luck' of the number thirteen is an unknown thing; and so is the "something" that brings the "bad luck." But we do know coincidence and suggestion. The former explanation fails, since itself requires explanation.

14. Is your explanation complete? It is said that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and for long people believed that the sun obeyed, offering the explanation, "With God all things are possible." The real question is not any possibility, for a God who *would* stop the Universe in the interest of a tribal brawl *could*

do anything, even destroy the multiplication table. The explanation, you see, creates a God for the occasion; but that kind of God requires explanation himself. To say that a God *could* do a thing because it is assumed that he *would* and *ought*, gives us now so many problems that we forget all about Joshua.

15. Does your explanation *disprove what it purports to explain?* The life of Jesus is explained on the ground that he was sent into the world by an angry God in order to make a sacrifice for or to that God. Only a God of love (in whom the author believes) could do such a "sending," and such a God could need no sacrifice to appease his wrath.

16. Does your explanation deal with *facts* or with *assumptions?* "There are more false facts current in the world than false theories." "Fact,— observation,— induction, have always been the watchwords of those who have dealt most extensively in *fancy*." It is said that Kepler vindicated Astrology, asking: "How could the principles of a science be false where experience showed that its principles were universally fulfilled?" The last statement was merely an *assumption*.

17. Does the explanation follow as a *true sequence* from the facts? Religious "conversion" is sometimes explained as a result of the immediate action of a Divine Being, but another class of thinkers ridicule this reference, and "explain" the experience in terms of psychology. This explanation by no means excludes the former, since "in him we live and move and have our being."

Thus we come to our final conclusion:

If we apply the above tests of reasoning to our beliefs and practices, we shall evidently *develop a kind of mental "atmosphere" which will spontaneously dis-*

tinguish actual from merely apparent superstitions, and shall unfold a spirit of courage to face every question of the kind involved with one sole end in view, the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Now, this is the greatest achievement that man has worked out: That he has at last set to himself the task of discovering what his experience actually and precisely means. Such an undertaking indicates the greatest conceivable courage. That undertaking, because it signifies all nameable values in your life, you are invited to assume — which means that you adopt as your own for life the following resolution:

"I will no longer fear to observe things exactly as they are, nor to conclude exactly as facts and my own mind compel me to conclude; and I will assault matter, law, force, form, life, kingdoms, thrones, humans, devils and gods with the purpose always of discovering in them the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Such courage is of more value than any truth you may arrive at, any level of development to which you may rise, because, properly directed, it will lead to all truth needed in your life and infallibly bring you to higher and higher planes of growth from year to year during your career on any planet. The courage that dares all for the truth climbs a Jacob's Ladder which disappears in the Infinite. We thus come to our regimes, so long deferred. Since the Mountain of Mystery has been worked for ages, and has yielded both superstition and truth, we may conveniently classify the details by names associated with mining and minting gold.

The Mining Regimes of Truth-Courage.

I. The Regimes of Mining. These regimes utilize our previous studies.

First Regime of Mining: *Finding the Causes of Superstition.* You are invited to examine any belief or practice which you think superstitious, and to search for the probable *causes* lying back of the same, employing in this search the list of causes given in the preceding chapter, and to continue such work with all instances familiar to you, both common and superior. This will prove laborious, and it may be perplexing, but you are confidently assured that the effort will be of direct value in the line of this book — the culture of courage.

Second Regime of Mining: *Finding the Common Superstitions.* You are invited to examine the list of common superstitions and beliefs and practices called superstitious, and honestly to admit either faith or conduct corresponding to any one of them. A good many little habits and notions lurk within mind and life, unchallenged, perhaps unknown, which ought to be dragged out into the light and frankly inspected and confessed.

Third Regime of Mining: *Finding the Superior Superstitions.* All sorts of old beliefs which have come down to us from the Middle Ages still remain in the "soul," it may be, and are supposed to be genuine gold, which, perhaps, if we could get them out into sun, rain and air, we should discover to be that ancient enemy of the miner, "fool's gold"— the irrational doctrine or creed or philosophy. You are therefore invited to apply the preceding regime to the various propositions and claims of science, medicine and theology now current, and thus to prepare the way for fearless thinking and honest conclusions in all such matters.

II. The Regimes of the Assayer. We have seen that a belief or practice regarded at one time as

superstitious may come to be regarded as truth at a later period. We should indulge no prejudice against a proposition or custom merely because it looks to us like a superstition, nor for the same simply because it seems to have the earmarks of reasonableness. Thus, we perceive our appropriate regimes:

First Regime of the Assayer: *Distinguishing True Superstitions from False.* You are invited to recall instances which have seemed believable in your experience but which have subsequently turned out to have had no true reality back of them, and also to recall cases of alleged superstition that have ultimately proven prefectly legitimate.

Second Regime of the Assayer: *Applying the Criteria of Superstition.* You are invited to apply the criteria for superstitions to the beliefs and customs in which you now indulge, and also to such as you surely hold are not superstitious.

Third Regime of the Assayer: *Searching Self for Credulity.* You are invited to apply to your favorite beliefs and practices the considerations given in this chapter relating to the credulities of life.

Fourth Regime of the Assayer: *Applying the Tests of Reason.* You are invited to apply to your own habitual manner of thinking and judging the great tests for legitimate thought-action already set forth.

Persistent practice in applying these regimes to yourself will involve time and effort, of course, but you are again assured that the results will more than "make good" the expense granted the work.

III. The Regimes of the Mint. It is a mistake to stamp all sorts of objects with the image and superscription of currency. And it is foolish to remain in ignorance of base metals and counterfeit money. Epic-

tetus detected many untrue notions in his time, and Socrates found Greece full of false intellectual coinage. The Middle Ages possessed scarcely any real mental currency of value. Then came the great miners and minters, and our better era dawned upon the world. It is for every person to assist in the work which they have begun. Our regimes point in that direction — and especially to your own personal improvement.

First Regime of the Minter: *The Lessons of Experience.* We substantially repeat the analysis of experience given on page 252. You are invited to ask the following questions in regard to your own experience, as, for example, with spirits, lines of the palm, your "ruling planet," and so on, and any extraordinary experience you may have had:

What is this *action* upon myself?

What is this *not-self* so acting upon me?

What is my *reaction* to this action upon me of a not-self?

What is *this that receives* action from the not-self and reacts thereto? If we submit our experiences to such interrogation, we shall discover that many apparently real occurrences have no actual existence.

Second Regime of the Minter: *Supplanting the Dynamic Idea.* We yield to many superstitions, as already intimated, because we have fallen into the habit of doing so, and this habit has sprung from the unchecked influence of some associated ruling thought. You sip the foam from coffee "for money," and avoid as "bad luck" the number thirteen, and begin no business on a Friday to obviate "misfortune," knowing all the time that "there 's nothing in it," but continuing in the practice because, the moment the idea related to the superstition occurs to you, the impulse to act

accordingly is felt, and you respond almost if not quite automatically and unconsciously. The remedy consists in steadfastly refusing the idea any power to start you off, no matter what the consequences may, might, could, would or should be in the case. No consequences can be comparable in evil to the persistence of such superstitions — the reign of such irrational ideas.

Third Regime of the Minter: *Escaping from Custom and Common Opinion.* This escape does not call for total disregard for other people's ideas and habits of thought and conduct. All declarations of freedom should be made with a "decent regard for the opinions of mankind." Nevertheless, the "decent regard" does not demand submission to all the sciences, creeds and customs that may chance to be current. If you truly think for yourself, this "truly" will consider the experiences and reasoning of clear-headed men and women of the present and the past, yet will insist upon independent conclusions from actual facts rather than the common run of belief and practice around you. I may respect any man's exercise of belief and right of conduct, but I need not permit the fact to control my mind and life. You are, therefore, invited to undertake your own liberation from such factors,— not necessarily from agreement with other people's opinions and customs, but surely from the unconscious or conscious domination of merely the "going" thought of the time.

Fourth Regime of the Minter: *At Home in the Universe.* You are invited to affirm every day of your life: "*This Universe is the Thought of an Infinite Thinker who means immensely and entirely well by me, since I, too, am his thought, here in the world for the pur-*

pose of unfolding by searching out his truth wherever it may be found. The Universe is therefore my home. I belong here. Here am I to dwell forever. All things belong to me, to know and to use, as rapidly as I prepare therefor. How can I fear in my own home if such be my aim: the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?"

Fifth Regime of the Minter: *Courage for the Truth.* If you are after just the real truth, nothing less, and are at home in a Universe that belongs to you because you belong to it, nothing whatever remains for fear. Courage, then, in the integrity of your soul, honest and open, to which essentially no conceivable harm can come! What can injure the self that is turned squarely toward the final Polaris of Truth — the Pole Star of Right?

You are fearful of disregarding that old superstition — "horseshoe," "devil," "haunt," or what-not. *Test* the matter by risking yourself without the fetish!

You are fearful of that ancient insult to Deity: Heaven wills your ill-health, your poverty, and so on. *Test* the matter by demanding of this Deity that he prove himself more divine and less human!

You are fearful of disbelieving that old tradition of trade, science, religion, creed, book. *Test* the matter by letting yourself go for a while, believing actually what your mind wants to believe. ***Test it!***

What the world needs is
A new God,
A new variety of mental freedom,
A new man and a new woman, and
Courage to seek and trust only —
The Truth, the Whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth.

HARMONIC WITH THE PERFECT WHOLE.

I am the courage of the soul
Harmonic with the Perfect Whole.

At home amid Deific Spheres,
By reason led, conformed by love,
My mind, alight, all vision clears
Of daedal dome and glooms above,
And fashions on the farthest space
Of being, Being's unknown Face:
Maker am I of That, and made —
Heir and creator, unafraid.

Harmonic with the Perfect Soul,
I am the courage of the Whole.

CHAPTER XVI.

Fears in Religion for Deity.

"All books on every branch of spiritual science emphatically warn us against the admission of doubt or fear. They are the inversion of the principle that builds up, and they are therefore the principle which pulls down."— *Troward.*

RELIGION is the world's prime breeder of fears, and for three reasons: It is the conscious mind's interpretation of the Infinite's movements within the subconscious mind, and is therefore more or less a mixture of truth and error, harmony and discord; moreover, it deals with the highest possibilities in man and with the unseen of the Universe; finally, it assumes responsibility for the future. These factors infallibly tend to breed fear-*thought*, the most natural expression of which is fear-*feeling*. Seeking a foundation remedy for this fear, we discover:

It is imperatively necessary that the following proposition be thoroughly vitalized in mind: *Nothing can come to us from any unseen intelligence save through the channels of our own thinking.* This being so, religion and all its elements are the products, either of our thought-interpreting coöperation with the Infinite's movements in the subconscious mind, or of our own independent interpretation by the conscious mind of what we observe in Nature and ourselves. In either case the result is the same in one regard: *we thought-create the religion that we accept.*

Thus we see the sense in which it is true that we create by thinking: Deity (as we know Deity), Religion (as we know Religion), Devils (as we know Devils), Hell (as we know Hell) — the "knowing" meaning, the only knowing possible to us, in our thought.

Two Principles of Religious Fearlessness.

These statements yield two principles of deliverance from the fears of religion. We state the first as follows:

No cause remains for fear-feeling issuing from religious thought in itself, when we see that we create that religious thought, and, hence, create the fear-thoughts of religion, and that we may so reform our religious thought as to make fear-thoughts then unnatural and so, may banish them. As fear-*thoughts* cease, fear-*feelings* die.

Nevertheless, the principle here given applies to products of religious *thinking only*. Now, fear-feelings spring from fear-thought operating alone and from fear-thought induced by *conduct*. We need, then, a second principle of deliverance from the fears of religion, to-wit:

No cause remains for fear-feeling issuing from religious thought associated with conduct when the latter is consciously as near right as one can make it.

This principle may look like a very easy matter, and is liable, therefore, to misunderstanding. Analysis reduces it to certain important propositions which will tend to "make strait the way."

The Two Principles Honestly Applied.

First, as to Truth. The reform of religious *thought* requires:

1. *That we resolve to follow the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, (pertaining to religion) wherever it really leads — the leading being tested by experience, best self-interest and best other-interest — no matter what may be the consequences;*

2. *That we resolutely cultivate a desire to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth (pertaining to religion);*

3. *That we resolutely be as determined to discover the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth (pertaining to religion) as we concede we ought to be determined to follow the same when known.*

These resolutions, persistently emphasized in thought, will infallibly breed courage and expand the truth-horizon of your mind.

Secondly, as to Conduct. The conformity of *conduct* to the truth-principles and the above resolutions requires:

1. *That we resolve to obey right laws of conduct, in toto and all the time, wherever they lead, tested by the criteria of experience, best self-interest and best other-interest, no matter what may be the consequences;*

2. *That we resolutely cultivate a desire to know the right laws of conduct exactly as they are;*

3. *That we resolutely be as determined to discover the right laws of conduct as we concede we ought to be determined to obey the same when known.*

These resolutions also will infallibly breed courage, and the two sets will inevitably banish indifference toward truth and right.

Observe: By *truth* is here meant: thought which harmonizes, so far as we can make out, with the best possible ideas entertained concerning all existences, their laws, rights, privileges and development. By

right laws of conduct we mean the laws of right conduct. By right conduct is meant that which conserves the best interests of the self and the best interests of others, so far as we can make out, and as tested by individual experience related to that of a general nature.

Observance of the preceding considerations should banish all fears originating in religion. Nevertheless, there are many people who are at least non-religious, yet who entertain some of the fears of religion; and there are many religious people who dwell in the midst of fears throughout the whole of life. For the two classes named the invitation is pertinent: Make the requirements given in connection with the First and Second Principles of deliverance from fear the dominating rules of all your conduct, and, meanwhile, work into your very being the following

Steps to All-Embracing Courage-Confidence.

These steps may be indicated by certain propositions concerning Deity, concerning the Universe, concerning your relations thereto, concerning the individuality of the self, concerning the kingdoms of the self, and concerning religious beliefs. These considerations follow in order.

First, Considerations Concerning Deity: Apart from the Universe. The Universe had a cause. Ultimately conceived, there could have been but one First Cause. In order to think of this Cause, we conceive it in terms of the realest and best within ourselves — unlimited; that is, consciousness, reason, will — unlimited; that is, as personal — unlimited. This is the best we can do, and the least. But this best and least must stand alone, unmodified, undescribed: not human — *Infinite Being.* We can know nothing whatever

directly through reason concerning this Being, save that it is and must be *I Am That I Am*, and, therefore, since *each of us must say* also of the essence of the self, I Am That I Am, that this Being is, in some unmodified and indescribable way, *personal*. Thus, we can only think the thought, Infinite Being; and we are led to think this thought because Infinite Being seems Cause Adequate and Comprehensive to all that ever has been, is now, or ever shall be. The thought, then, means: *Personal Existence without predicates and prior to or apart from Creation.*

Second, Considerations Concerning Deity: As Causing the Universe. The Infinite Being is All. No material in the beginning — *in principio* — existed apart from this Cause, out of which it might construct a Universe. We conceive of creation, therefore, as taking place "*within*" *the Infinite:* not "within" in a spacial sense, but "within" in, as nearly as we can make it, a *mental sense*. Creation would then be a Self-causing from Self by Thought.

This conception puts the Infinite into the Universe, so to speak, as its *now-Cause*. I go into my thought as a now-cause. Nothing exists in my thought-world "by itself." All exists there only as I mentally now-create it. The Infinite now-creates, always has now (then)-created, always will now (then)-create, the Universe — so long as it shall stand.

Our thought of Deity is now, not as unmodified, undescribed Infinite Being, but as *Being in the Universe as its Now-Cause*. The Infinite Being is, thus, *in our human thought*, modified (for us) by the thought of *immanence in all things:* by now-being and now-causing the Universe. Hence, Infinite Being may now be described as *Cause*, and as *Immanence*, or as *Source* and

Ground of all existence. We thus conclude that "in Him we live and move and have our being."

Third, Considerations Concerning the Universe. The Universe is seen and unseen. This means, in a large division, that it is Substance and Force. As substance it is visible and invisible. As force it is wholly invisible. Now, *visibility is not an attribute of substance in itself,* but is *a product of the reaction of the self with substance.* Things are visible because they act upon us in various ways and we react to that action; that is, *think that which means "visibility."* We see matter, not with the eye, but with the mind affected by matter through the material eye. The visibility of substance, then, is a thought — a mental state. Visibility reduces to a condition of the invisible self.

Now, we must define *substance* as *identically itself,* all through, so to speak. If a thing is not the same all through, it is then two or more things — not a one-thing but a mixture or compound of things. As identically the same throughout, substance is one. It is the Greek *ens* — being-entity.

Matter is one. Things are many. "Matter" is a word standing in our thought for substance — of a *material* kind. *Things* are expressions of that substance acting upon us through the senses and interpreted by mind as manifests of substance to mind. We can only know substance by means of its manifests.

Substance, we see, is not two-fold, two-sided, manifold or many-sided: it is one, in and throughout itself. Its apparent many-sidedness obtains only in its manifestations.

But the manifestations are differences, not in substance itself, but merely in its *action upon mind.* Substance remains the same, but its action upon mind

is manifold. To these varying actions of substance *upon* mind, mind reacts accordingly. This varying reaction is, and only can be in the nature of the case, mental activity; that is, feeling, will, thought — in the all-inclusive sense, just thought.

The visibility of substance is really visibility of its manifestations, and such visibility springs from the fact, not that substance is two-fold or two-sided, having a phase in that of the visible order and a phase in that of the invisible order, but that mind interprets as visible the manifestations of substance so acting upon mind that it *shall* so interpret.

Now, we all assent to the statement that mind can interpret mind, or, that mind can act upon mind. But mind is all one in essence. No one can conceive of two or more *essentially* different *kinds* of mind. In the notion that mind can act upon mind we have the necessary assumption that mind is the substance: of one essence, one in itself, identical throughout. Thus only does mental interaction become possible. We are not so constituted as to permit assent to the proposition that a substance, one in itself, can act upon or be acted upon by another substance totally different from the former — having no quality, attribute, nature at one with the former. In such a case there is no meeting-ground making interaction possible. It has always been a problem with great minds that matter, one thing, could act upon mind, another thing. Since this seems unthinkable, we must modify our thought of matter. It does not follow that we must modify our thought of mind, because, even if we try to do so, mind will always remain, *to mind,* just mind — can never be conceived in terms of other than itself. But the "*matter*" of which we think, not being the thinker — your own

mind — is susceptible of being modified in mind's thought to other than what mind has heretofore thought matter to be. Mind *must* be mind, whatever matter is; but matter will be to mind whatever mind concludes that it is. If we cannot conceive how matter, one thing, can act upon mind, another different thing, we must modify our thought of matter. If two realities can only act upon one another as they have some common ground of qualities, attributes or essences, and if matter does act upon mind and mind upon matter, then mind and matter are manifests of one *kind* of substance. Mind insists on remaining mind: hence, matter is a manifest of the common Reality. The human mind is really a manifest of the human self, but the self is also a manifest of the common Reality. Matter, then, becomes a manifest of the Universal Self (another name for the common Reality) — that is, the Infinite. If we thus conceive of the Universe, we see that the latter's action upon us is the action of the Infinite upon us. The Universe becomes the Thought of the Infinite, and, as consisting of regular and established activities, may be regarded as the Universal Mind of the Infinite so far forth.

In this view, the visibility of things is simply our mental reaction to the action upon us of the Universal Mind: is our induced thought concerning it. This reaction-thought of ours is a product of evolution, and is established, regular and common to all in the general outcome.

We see, then, that the words "visible" and "invisible" are relative terms — terms that are relative to action in certain fixed ways upon us of the Universe with its Infinite and to our reaction thereto. If the so-called invisible Universe could act upon us through

the eyes, we should then see what is now invisible. And if the visible should cease to act upon us as it now does, it would then become the invisible.

Thus also in regard to the other senses. The Universe is a manifest of Mind to minds. Its reality is one. Its manifests are many. We say that it is composed of visible matter and invisible force. But we now see that visibility is our reaction to matter's action upon us and that matter has become a manifest of Mind. Science is at present coming to hold that matter is force: matter is electricity and electricity is a form of force. The fundamental thing to science seems to be Energy. Matter is energy so acting upon us as to produce the mental reaction which we call visibility. But force or energy then acts upon us. Force is not a substance; it must be a manifest of substance. But the fundamental Energy is not a thing, not a substance; it must be a manifest of substance. Two totally different substances cannot act upon or react to one another. Without community, the two "substances" cannot come into relation at all. Since we *do* assent to the proposition that mind acts upon mind and reacts with mind, and since matter — force— energy — does actually act upon mind inducing mental reaction, our conclusion is that force is of the order of mental activity — activity in the Infinite Mind.

Thus, the Universe is now conceived of, not as visible and invisible, but as manifest of Mind to minds: visible as minds react in terms of "visibility," and invisible as minds react in terms of "invisibility."

Fourth, Considerations Concerning Our Relations with the Universe. If, then, substance manifests in the Universe as matter and force by its manifold actions upon our minds, and if we react to such varying action

so that a "visible" Universe comes before us, our relation with the Universe, thus far, is the relation of a kind of reaction inducing what we call visibility.

But we know from certain effects upon us that substance acts upon us in ways that we interpret as "invisible." We do not, for example, see electricity, heat, gravity, magnetism, and so on. We do not, again, see thought, will, emotion. We do not see the basic medium of force and personal interaction, the ether. We do not see the causes of innumerable mental effects: thoughts, feelings, intuitions, inspirations. Our relation with the Universe is thus extended beyond that of a kind of reaction inducing visibility, and becomes of a kind dealing with and interpreting what we call the invisible Universe. The Universe is one, but its manifests are "seen" and "unseen" and manifold, and our reactions correspond to the orders of its action upon us.

These orders of action need, as already classified, only appropriate names. Let us, first, call them the *Objective* and the *Subjective*. But, since the word *objective* may mean for us merely the *external*, which meaning is too narrow because many activities of the Universe that affect us seem to be, not external, but rather, internal, let us substitute for objective the word *conscious*. And since the word *subjective* may mean for us merely those actions upon us that are *consciously mental*, which idea is also too narrow because many activities of the Universe upon us are not consciously recognized, let us substitute for subjective the word *subconscious*. We thus name the two orders of action upon us by the Universe, the *Conscious* and the *Subconscious*.

This division, however, needs to be crossed, be-

cause we are considering the whole Universe acting upon us, now as that which we call Nature, visible and invisible, now as that which we call the Infinite in and supporting Nature. We therefore say that we are acted upon by Nature *as* Nature and by the Infinite *as* the Immanent Support of Nature. The action is all of the Infinite, of course, but the distinction will prove convenient and suggestive.

We therefore sustain the following relations with the Universe and its Infinite:

With the Universe — Conscious Objective: sense-interpreting Nature alone (relations of sense-observation);

With its Infinite — Conscious Objective: sense-interpreting Nature as supported by the Infinite (relations of sense-thought);

With the Universe — Conscious Subjective: reason-interpreting Nature alone (relations of scientific consciousness);

With its Infinite — Conscious Subjective: reason-interpreting Nature as supported by the Infinite (relations of philosophical consciousness);

With the Universe — Subsconcious Subjective: inspirational induction-interpreting Nature alone (relations of subconscious reasoning);

With its Infinite — Subconscious Subjective: inspirational induction-interpreting Nature as supported by the Infinite (relations of subconscious spiritual knowing);

With the Universe and Infinite as one Sytsem — Subconscious Subjective: utilization of the Universe, as supported by the Infinite, through thought-action demand (relations of subconscious and conscious control).

We may say, roughly, that these relations summarize as:

Reactions with the Universe as such by conscious mentality;

Reactions with the Infinite by subconscious mentality.

Fifth, Considerations Concerning the Self. In the sense of the relations just suggested, especially the latter in italics, man is a two-sided individual self: one side primarily reactive to the Infinite All within himself, one side primarily reactive to the Infinite supporting Nature.

That phase of the self which reacts to the Infinite within the self is primarily the subconscious, though the conscious may also so react, while that phase which reacts to the Infinite in Nature is primarily the conscious, though the subconscious may also so react.

These two phases of the self, the subconscious and the conscious, constitute the human person. The self is one: subconscious in certain activities, conscious in others. The person is a real individual, identical with himself, separate from all other individuals; but is capable of the activities indicated.

As, in the visible, tangible self, you are not Nature, though *in* Nature, so, in the invisible self, you are not the Infinite, though *in* the Infinite. You are a part of Nature in Nature's allness, but in your individuality *reacting* to Nature you are a separate existence. You have the essence of Nature, but not its existence-totality. You are also a part of the Infinite in the Infinite's allness, but as combined subconscious and conscious individuality *reacting*, on the one hand to Nature, and on the other hand to the Infinite, you are again a separate existence. You have the essence of the Infi-

nite, but not its existence-totality. You are separate and in Nature, and so, in the Infinite, because you — the human self — *react* to Nature and the Infinite. If we could not react with Nature, we should either not be at all or be Nature herself. If we could not react with the Infinite, we should either not be at all or be the Infinite. *The guaranty of our separate existence and individuality is our capacity for reaction with the two great realities named.*

Sixth, Considerations Concerning Our Kingdoms. The guaranty which is given by your reaction with Nature and the Infinite *covers all that you are and possess and all that you ever can become and possess,* because it affects the two phases of your being, both the subconscious and the conscious mind. You react with the Infinite through the conscious self by use of the senses and inference-thought and intuition. The last of this statement merges into the following: You react *primarily* with the Infinite through the *subconscious* self because, psychologically speaking, the Infinite is there "nearest" you — is most in psychic oneness with your deepest selfhood. You react with Nature (including human life) *primarily* through the *conscious* self, although in certain moods the subconscious self comes into direct reaction therewith, more or less independently of the senses and of induction.

Now, our reaction with Nature and the Infinite induces various *consequences within us and in our possessions and environment.* We react upon Nature in countless ways, utilizing its materials and forces, and thus inducing corresponding changes in our conditions. Precisely so is it with regard to invisible Nature — the Universe pervaded and supported by the Infinite. We react upon that unseen Universe by

thought and by *conduct*, and thus induce consequences in life and character corresponding to such reaction.

Such reactions may evidently be *right* or *wrong*. The reactions are right when in harmony with the laws that relate to them, and wrong when out of harmony therewith; that is to say, as a matter of fact, when the *reactions engage the laws in your best interest* (right) or *against your best interest* (wrong). You can only engage laws as *universal*, but when you engage universal laws, they *particularize* on your case. When you so particularize given universal laws,—*for* your interest, or *against* your interest,—the consequences occur *without regard to your use of other laws*. For example, there are certain laws relating to nourishment by food which you may engage by eating, and the use of which will prove beneficial or injurious independently of your use of the laws of, say, mental development or moral character or wealth-getting. *Our reactions with Nature, seen and unseen, and with its Infinite, always engage specific laws of the whole Universe related to the reactions, and always bring to us certain consequences, regardless of the operation of other laws related to other reactions.* We see, then, that the consequences depend, not upon the attitude of the *entire* self toward the Universe, but solely upon our reactions engaging in any particular way any one or more of the universal and uniform laws of Nature. Wherever you circuit-in with the laws, you receive the consequences, good or evil, no matter what your entire personality may stand for.

If our reactions are out of harmony with specific laws relating to them, *we do not disturb the laws at all*, which are immutable, but we engage their operation *against* our related possible welfare. On the contrary, reactions in harmony with specific laws engage their

operation for our actual welfare. We thus discover the criterion of right and wrong reaction. The criterion is *welfare in any respect* — not in some special respect standardized by some school or teacher. So far as concerns specific reactions engaging specific laws, the criterion of rightness in the reactions *is welfare of some definite kind.* As we engage other laws by reactions in harmony with them, we by so much add to given kinds of welfare. Were all our reactions in harmony with the laws relating to them, the individual welfare would be perfect and complete.

We may say, now, for the purpose of general illustration, that the laws of the Universe relate to —

Health * * * *Prosperity* * * * *Unfoldment* * * * *Spiritual Power.*

The criterion of harmony with the laws of health, prosperity, unfoldment and spiritual power being individual welfare in the sense relative to the whole humanity, the test of right or wrong reaction with the laws of the Universe securing welfare in these respects is *Experience.* There is no other safe test — in opinion, authority, revelation. What will secure welfare can only be tested by individual experience related to the whole body of individuals.

If, then, our action — reaction to Nature, seen and unseen, and the Infinite — is in harmony with the laws of health, or of prosperity, or of unfoldment, or of spiritual power, it engages the specific laws in behalf of the corresponding welfare: laws of health for health, of prosperity for prosperity, of unfoldment for unfoldment, of spiritual power for spiritual power.

But our reactions should at this point be more particularly defined. The word "reaction" represents any variety of action of the individual, especially, let

us say, either *physical* or *mental.* All physical activity springs from mental,— conscious or subconscious,— but the physical pertains to the so-called visible world, and so may be retained in our division. The mental does not always express in the physical, and so may be set over against the latter in our thought. Our reactions to the Universe, then, are mental and physical. In a word, our reactions are those of *thought* and those of *conduct.*

We arrive at the conclusion that both thought and action engage the laws relating to them — *as* thought and *as* action, and the laws relating to *kinds* of thought and *kinds* of action — either for or against individual welfare, according, precisely, as thought and action are in harmony or out of harmony with the laws.

All this means that the Universe is so constituted that when we engage any law related to our reaction with Nature seen and unseen and with the Infinite in Nature, certain consequences follow, beneficial or injurious according to the reaction's degree of harmony with the laws engaged — not according to our harmony with the whole Universe or with the Infinite in all its manifests. The inevitable outcome of our reasoning here is large and important.

We have thought of the Infinite conceived as existing prior to and independent of the Universe,— unmodified, indescribable,— and also as existing in the Universe, in a mental sense, as its Immanent Ground and Source. Conceived as such Present Cause of all existences, the Infinite pervading the Universe must be regarded as *orderly* and *universal* in all its ways of being and doing, since we find that Nature is precisely so. Nature exists and acts universally and uniformly. This fact gives us the "Laws of Nature,"— which are

its uniform and universal ways of being and doing, altogether independent of our opinions in the matter; that is, of our thought-created "laws of Nature." There are *real* Nature-*ways*, hence real Nature-*Laws*. But if the Infinite is present Cause of Nature, Nature's Laws are the Infinite's ways of being and doing so far as Nature is concerned. Thus, the Laws of the Universe are the Infinite's universal and uniform thought-action in and for the Universe.

We conclude that the laws that relate to our thought-reactions and our conduct-reactions are the universal and uniform laws of the Universe and of the Infinite in the Universe as its Present Cause.

These laws are never *broken*, never *set aside*, but operate universally and uniformly throughout the ages.

If we desire the benefit of the laws, we must think and act in harmony with them.

Man is the highest expression of the development of the Universe so far as we know; that is, speaking more broadly, conscious individual is that highest expression.

The Universe must exist in the interest of its highest expression because it has produced that expression, because this signifies completeness of the System, and because completeness of the System is a goal beyond which there can be no higher.

This means that the Infinite, as Present Cause of and in Nature, seen and unseen, exists *in that relation* in the interest of man.

Since the laws of Nature and the ways of the Infinite are universal and uniform, man's interests can only be furthered through the particularization in him in each case of such laws or ways. No law can be changed for any individual or any exigency. Man

must engage the laws by harmonious reaction in order to secure any degree of welfare whatever. If he does so engage the laws, welfare of some sort is inevitable. Just as inevitable are injury and failure if he thinks or acts inharmoniously with the laws. And it should be remembered that the case is a matter of engaging *any* law, without regard to man's *total* harmony with *all* laws.

This is the First Intention of the Universe and its Infinite. The Universe is placed by the Infinite at man's disposal for welfare through engagement of universal and uniform laws — which are the Infinite's ways *in* the Universe.

And, since the individual *may* adjust to law, engage the laws which are only universal and uniform, we see that he then particularizes the laws in his own behalf. The laws remain universal and changeless, but become universal-particular when by thought and action the individual engages them for his own welfare.

This is the Second Intention of the Universe and its Infinite. The Infinite places Nature, seen and unseen, at our disposal for individual welfare in health, prosperity, unfoldment and spiritual power. "All things are yours." Our human kingdoms are all right existences.

There is a single word that seems exactly to cover all methods by which we may engage for welfare the laws of the Universe. This word is

Demand.

On the word "demand" we observe: that it is not an arrogant word, since it should involve appreciation for the First and Second Intentions of the Universe and its Infinite, and since the Universe is placed by the Infi-

nite at our disposal for welfare; that if we fail to make such demand for welfare we are *defeating such Intentions;* and that if we seek welfare in any other way than through engagement of universal and uniform laws *we are assuming that the Infinite can only provide for our case by special dispensations,*— that is, that it is not the Infinite; that, finally, the universal laws are numerous enough and sufficiently adequate to respond to any right thought, any right action, any right petition conceived by the mind of man.

The word "demand" expresses the matter before us. It means *a demand,* since the Universe is *placed at our disposal for welfare.* But a demand may be an action or a series of activities, or it may be a thought or a series of thoughts. *True individual welfare calls for harmony between thought and action.* Since action springs from thought, the emphasis should here be placed on demand by thought. *It is ours to thought-demand for welfare of any kind or degree.*

We thought-demand when we in thought make demand for some definite phase of welfare, as, health, or wealth, or truth, or self-control, and so on. That is to say, we think our desires in terms of a demand for the objects desired.

We have referred to the Universe as seen and unseen, and we now see that we do, by thought and action, make demands which engage the universal and uniform laws that express in the visible world. When we plant our seed we make such demands — and in a thousand other ways. There are evidently laws of the Universe that do not express in visible form. If the preceding considerations are valid, these laws are also subject to engagement for welfare. Here, too, thought must be the main factor. We thus think our

demands, and if they harmonize with the laws related to them, welfare-response must inevitably follow. If we demand health with adequate power and harmony, health *must* ensue. If with adequate harmony and power we demand prosperity, this also *cannot* fail us. Thus with regard to all forms of welfare.

Demand that is *adequate in harmony and power* is, of course, a matter of development and individual endowment, but we have this encouragement: *that we can test this vast law of demand, step by step, all the way through life; that we develop in the power of demand by making demands in a state of increasing harmony with the Universe which we are using; and that our endowment has a limit that is really far beyond actual exhaustion in this life and has no limit in the stretch of the everlasting career.*

Remembering that the self is conscious and subconscious, and that we are to emphasize demand by thought *above* demand by action,— though the two should harmonize together (since action expresses thought of some sort),— we now observe:

That the *initiative* of thought-demand and action-demand occurs in the *conscious* self, because this is the seat of reason and volition; and, on this last account,

That the *working-out* of the *action*-demand to its ultimate consequences rests for the most part with the conscious self; but

That the *working*-out of the *thought*-demand to its ultimate consequences rests for the most part — almost entirely — with the subconscious self.

The last statement is true for two reasons:

First, the subconscious self acts only on *suggestion* and on premises given it by the conscious self;

Secondly, the subconscious self exists "*nearest,*" psychologically speaking, to Nature seen and unseen and to the Infinite within Nature.

These declarations mean that after the conscious mind thinks its demands, the subconscious takes them and brings them *directly to bear* upon the Universal Nature and its Infinite.

Now, for our practical life, we need a *nexus* between matter so-called and spirit so-called, since they are differing manifests of the One Infinite Reality. This *nexus* is found in the ether of science. It would seem that the "first" manifest of the Infinite in Nature is this ether, so that all matter, force, personality, exist as "forms" of the activities of the Infinite in the ether. Nature and every human is pervaded by this "first reality."

Thought engages the brain-cells and therein induces action of the ether within itself. The laws of its action are of course uniform and universal. But such are also characteristics of the ways of the Infinite in Nature. When thought engages the ether, it engages the laws of Nature, which are the ways of the Infinite. Thought-demand, therefore, acts upon these realities by the *nexus* indicated, the ether.

Our conclusion is that Nature and its Infinite are placed for welfare at the disposal of every individual human through right demands initiated in the conscious self and "conveyed" into the Universal Reality through the subconscious self. The subconscious self is a manifest of the Infinite operating in Nature, and that self, receiving suggestions (demands) from the conscious, impresses the suggestions upon the Universe-Infinite as demands. Exactly as electricity is a response to conditions established by man therefor, so

welfare, in all its forms, are inevitable responses to the appropriate conditions which we designate as demands.

Observe, then: Since the subconscious self lies "nearest" the ether in Nature and its Infinite, it is for the conscious self to initiate demands for welfare which the subconscious self may bring to bear, first, upon the law-abiding ether, and, secondly, upon the law-respecting, that is, the self-respecting Infinite.

The *formal* method of working the demands consists in *thinking any specific desire in terms of a demand:* thus—"I demand . . . . " (naming the thing desired).

The *dynamic* method consists in suggesting to the subconscious self by quiet, yet energetic thought, that it *receive* the demand and *impress it* upon the Universal Self in Nature placed at our disposal for welfare. Please read again and thoroughly understand this and the preceding paragraph.

When we possess the general conception of these pages as our own, we find courage and assurance springing up within consciousness. And this is important, since courage and confidence give subconscious demand the *omnipotence of faith.* "Whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye have them, and ye shall receive them." Believe that the demands are already accomplished in fact, and the accomplishment will surely in time be manifest in the practical life.

Conclusions Relative to Courage.

Our final grand conclusion is that all so-called "evils" in this world are the results of ignorance of the laws and of disharmony therewith. The First Intention of the Infinite in the Universe is human welfare through engagement of universal and uniform laws. The Universe is constituted for man's demand for

welfare. The second Intention is individual welfare through particularization of specific universal laws engaged by individual demand.

It is, therefore, error, that the Infinite directly wills, or that the Universe intends, to any human, anywhere, in any degree: disease or death, poverty or unhappiness, ignorance or error, spiritual weakness or loss. These "evils" issue from false demands or from demands wrongly put forth, or from demands that antagonize universal laws, or from the failure to put forth right demands. It is error, therefore, that the Infinite can be "pleased" with any of the above factors in our life, with any cramping of the personal life, with any degree whatever of slavery, with any degree whatsoever of fear-feeling (as commonly understood): for the Infinite, for the Universe, for death, for sickness, for the hereafter, for devils, for man or for Deity. On the contrary, the whole Universe, its facts, realities, laws, principles, truths, processes, beauties, wealth, forces and possibilities are placed at the disposal for welfare of every individual human, to demand and to possess, without fear or favor or impiety, according to development and unknown endowment.

By so much as you grow into this vast truth, by so much will you see that the considerations to follow are valid, yet altogether too inadequate for the whole truth. And above all things in our life, religion should inspire and guarantee freedom, personal development, happiness, courage, hope and faith in the Universe and its Infinite as placed at our disposal for welfare. Any religion which fails in these respects is false.

Sixth, Considerations Related to Religious Beliefs. When we conceive of the Infinite as existing independently of and prior to all creation, we conceive

Being as unmodified and indescribable. Such a Being we are not concerned with, except as adequate and comprehensive Cause.

When we conceive the Infinite as the Present Cause of our Universe by now-acting thought-creation, we conceive this Reality as in immediate relations with Nature and with ourselves as parts of Nature.

If we ask for the *goal* of such now-creation, our mental constitution compels us to seek for the highest existence known as such goal. We believe that so far as concerns this earth, we are ourselves such highest existence and goal.

We are conscious, however, that we are not yet "arrived" at the limit of our human possibilities, and we feel that the human self is such that its possibilities are in fact unlimited.

If we ask for the factors by which we have thus far "arrived" and by which we shall probably continue to realize our possibilities in an everlastingly relative sense, we conclude that *right and truth tested out by experience* must satisfy the search. This means that the factors of our best estate resolve into harmony of thought and experience with universal and uniform laws of the Universe seen and unseen.

But the sole *authority* on the questions: What are these laws? and What is practical harmony therewith? can be found only in the individual in the following state of mind:

A state of resolutions to *seek* the right and the truth;

A state of resolutions to *follow* the right and the truth;

A state of determination to *know* right and truth equal to determination to follow right and truth when known.

No lesser state of mind can satisfy the case. In such a state of mind there can be no responsibility beyond seeking right and truth and following the same to the best of personal ability. This state will infallibly bring the individual ultimately, and more and more, into harmony of thought and action with the laws of the Universe. Since the individual at his growing best is the goal of the Universe so far as we know, and since the individual must be his own authority on questions of right and truth, that is, questions of harmony of thought and action with the laws of the Universe, and since these laws are placed by the Infinite in the Universe, whose ways they are, it follows that —

1. He who honestly seeks to know right and truth and to follow the same so far as known, if he is as determined to know as to follow, can never in this search antagonize, and need never fear, the Infinite, either for his thought or for his intended conduct.

2. The right, as thus conceived and followed, cannot ultimately bring injury to any human self through the working of the Universe.

3. The truth thus conceived and followed cannot ultimately bring injury to any human self through the working of the Universe.

4. The sincere desire to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, cannot jeopardize personal welfare.

5. On the contrary, the lack of such desire must inevitably decrease personal welfare.

6. Permitting a really doubted proposition to stand in mind as true seriously threatens mental integrity and sorely disorganizes moral character.

7. Declining to permit a really doubted proposition to stand in mind as true, with willingness to

accept on sufficient evidence, cultivates moral character and conserves mental integrity.

8. The obligation to believe only when convinced increases in proportion as propositions rise from lower to higher elements of our nature, being greatest when such propositions concern mental integrity and moral character.

9. Mental integrity is not something apart from moral character, but is to the latter as blood is to the body — and "the blood is the life."

10. Man and the Universe are so constituted and related that the welfare of both depends upon *internal harmony*, which is, *being what the nature of a thing calls for*, and in man this requires freedom of sincerest individual thinking, acknowledgement of beliefs only on conviction of truth, confidence in truth as conceived through sincerest thought, and entire fearlessness in regard to the effort and attitude indicated and all possible consequences.

11. A Deity who would disapprove sincere search for truth, acceptance only of what seems to be truth, rejection of what surely seems doubtful, with open-mindedness toward all propositions and all evidence, and entire confidence in truth so conceived, for mental integrity and moral character, on earth and anywhere, is solely a creation of unclear and fearing thought.

12. There is no "sacred refuge," in church or book or creed, for the human mind against Deity or devil, save in the mind's own *fearless search* for and *surrender to* what it honestly conceives *to be truth*.

13. But *absolute* truth exists only in the sense that it is the perfect Thought of an Infinite Thinker, which absolute truth the human mind may, perhaps, never know; so that, for us, the *next* best thing is an

ideal of some ultimate truth which we perhaps may "in the future" attain, being, therefore, not now practicable; and the *next* best thing for each individual is the *completest or truest thought of which he is at any time capable.* This is the real truth-goal for all, and this only is "safe" from Deity or devil. But this surely prophesies personal welfare.

"I put to a sixteen-year-old school-girl the question 'What would you say that the truth is true to?' After some thought, she said: 'It is true to itself.' 'Why?' 'Because the truth is that which does n't pretend to be anything else.' There it is in a nutshell." Observe then:

This is the *true mind:* true to itself — not pretending to be what it is not. This is *true thought:* not pretending to be what the mind will not concede. This is the *truth for us:* that which with our best effort seems to a *true mind to be a true thought.* Hence, we add a final proposition:

14. The question of truth here is practical to mental integrity and moral character, and therefore to courage, so that the *truth within our reach is that which to a true mind seems to be a true thought and works well for soundness of mind and growth of good character.*

You are now invited to cultivate the courage which stands only for what you genuinely believe to be truth, practical in the respects indicated; and you are confidently assured that there is no Deity who can disapprove such attitude or injure you therefor, that there is no devil that can lead astray the fearless mind seeking for the whole truth, and that, while you will probably err at times, you are nevertheless on the only highway that makes, or that can make, for welfare in this world or in any of the many worlds to come.

Reason and Intuition.

I have tried to emphasize the indispensability of reason as interpreter of experience in our life. In the very process of analyzing the work of reason, another factor has been suggested, *Intuition*. Rather, it has appeared that reason involves intuition. The fundamental laws (and truths) of thought, such as underlie the notions of space and time, cause and effect, conclusion from adequate observation, and so on, are all universal and necessary intuitions induced by the nature of mind. Intuition is the basis of reason in its wholeness. Reason, conceived as the intuiting nature of mind, is, then, a deeper and broader reality than is the process of reasoning. Reasoning builds on reason, but reason accomplishes more than can reasoning alone. From reason spring our intuitions: the fundamental truths of thought and the personal convictions that issue independently of logical processes; from reasoning come the science and the exercise of logic.

We are to live according to reason and reasoning both — intuition and logic. The test of each factor is experience. But experience should test as interpreted by reason and intuition. And the great question which experience as so tested must answer is this: What works best in the long run for the whole of life? If into experience comes only logic, we shall miss everywhere the inspirations that flash into experience and lift it higher. If into experience come only intuitions, we shall miss the sanity and control of logic. We should modify logic in our hands by intuition and intuition by logic; and we should test experience by these factors thus modified, and test these factors, as thus modified, by experience. The general outcome of the attitudes indicated ought to be

The Courage of the Higher Beliefs.

The courage to believe in the Infinite as adequate and comprehensive First Cause;

The courage to believe in the Universe as the complex and real Thought of the Infinite Thinker manifest to us in universal and uniform ways of being and doing which we call laws;

The courage to believe in the self as a real individual whose subconscious phase is expression of the Infinite and whose conscious phase is master of the subconscious and of Nature;

The courage to believe that the Universe as above conceived and the Infinite therein are placed at our disposal for welfare through harmony and demand;

The courage to believe that the self is deathless (or may become so) and contains within itself the possibilities of everlasting unfoldment;

The courage to believe that all existence is contemporaneous, and that the now of earth and personal life is *more* important than any so-called future or any coming "stage of being;"

The courage to believe that life should be filled with happiness, possessed of power, open to intuition, controlled by reason, tested by experience, led by truth, made victorious by faith, rich in mental and physical health, owner by perfect right of all the good there is.

In the courage of such beliefs no one can fear — that which has been most feared in all the ages — the Infinite.

Nevertheless, this form of fear comes next before us as the perennial product of false thinking — with fear of devils and fear of hell clinging to it like two members of a trinity. We go on to examine this trinity.

The Fears of Deity.

You are invited to think for long of this proposition: It is yourself that makes the gods fearful.

The Western Book of religion declares that "God made man in his own image." Whatever inspiration we conceive to have been back of this statement, it was thought — the revelation was interpreted — and it was written by a man. All the God the writer knew he concepted in his thought. Hence, that man thought-fashioned that God in that man's image. The God was like the man at his best, and could not be otherwise, since the man's idea could not rise higher than his own best nature and character. The man believed that he had surely come from a Something which ought to be called God. He could not possibly know this God-Something: he could only know — that is, think — his thought-God. Since the Something which he represented by his thought-God was in his opinion the Source of all things and since the representation was his own best as a thought, he said that God had created man in God's image. We see that man had done the best he could do, and had "created" —thought— God in his own image.

As a matter of fact, the God-conception was not created by man in a single generation. Every generation thought-created the conception for itself. Man has always been engaged in getting a new God, because every stage of human development has made the old God-thoughts impossible. This fact springs from the character of man's "creation." Man himself was not a once-for-all product of creative power. Such a reality as man could only be created by becoming. This seems to have been the idea of the original Hebrew language;

"creation" was a process rather than an act. Man became through a process of development.

Always is it true that man is engaged in becoming. I am not the same, identically in all respects, with the boy whom I remember as myself, except in the original psychic factor capable of developing into the individual, I. The individual I is this psychic factor expressing in all my thought, feelings, wills, habits, aspirations, powers, possibilities — all that growing experience has made me to be. I am now the original psychic factor plus its total expression in what we call mind, and thus, a new creature continuously, more or less. My mind to-day is not the mind of the youth: it is a new mind, and hence, I am a new person as compared with anything that I have heretofore called myself. So, also, with the man-race. All the individual humans of the first man-race, the Aryan race, the Egyptian, the Greek, the Roman, and all subsequent races and generations of the present, have died so far as the body has been concerned. Every generation of men, then, has been a generation of new minds. The modern man-mind is a last product of evolution — of becoming — because each individual is a fresh psychic factor which builds its own mind. Whatever powers any individual has, or has had, he has created by interaction with the Universe — by experience. Whatever human race-mind has ever existed has been created by living individuals. There is no other race-mind. Thus, modern man-mind is a human creation — the product of past experiences establishing hereditary tendencies and wrought in the individual career. And thus, also, the new human minds have created the new gods, because each new mind had its own ideals and must think of the gods in terms of its own highest and best.

The God-thoughts change in human life precisely as the moral notions develop in man greater and finer strength. The fact that man has created a God-thought represents the highest elements in human nature, because all moral notions grow therefrom, are man's strength, and call for an Infinite and communion with the same. These highest elements in man call for God-thoughts because they are outcomes of the activity of the real Infinite within man. The Ground and Source of the Universe must come in touch with man's consciousness for his highest development, just as it must developingly express in Nature for the final outcome of cosmic evolution.

Hence it is not for man to throw out his God-thoughts from his life on the ground that he can never rise higher than his own thoughts concerning the Universe. What is true of the Infinite is true of Nature in any conception. We cannot go out of our own minds and know the absolute Nature yonder. It is for us to create the best Nature we can in our thought, improving our conception every year, knowing that the seen and unseen Universe is great enough to lift veil after veil forever, so that always we may create the Universe we know in fresher and grander thoughts, again and again, endlessly. Equally is it for man to create the best God he can (just as truly representative of the real Infinite God as the Nature-thought we have may represent an objective non-man Nature), assured that the I Am That I Am is great enough to lift veil after veil here also, so that we may go on creating That which we have in our search for That Which is.

But the God which men are coming to agree about is a God for whom fear-feeling is unworthy and an

insult. If you have the feeling of fear for Deity, it is because you have put into your Deity-thought things which to you call for fear. You really have made what you fear. The Dark Ages made a Devil and called it God, and so, feared their own Devil-Deity. If you create a fearful God, you certainly will fear him.

But if we remember that fear has a two-fold meaning,— fear-thought and fear-feeling,— and if we conclude that emotionless fear-thought is able to do for us all the good that fear-feeling can possibly do for us, without doing for us any of the mischief surely wrought by the latter, we then see that, so far as Deity, Nature, man are concerned, we need cultivate only that wisdom-thought which shall guide and guard in the interest of personal welfare. We require no fear-feeling to protect us from any natural existence or to guide us correctly in the way of life: wisdom-thought without a particle of fearing emotion will accomplish for us all such benefits. It is precisely so in regard to the Infinite. And wisdom-thought is simply thought which adjusts us to the Universe and its Infinite in right ways — that is, ways that lead to the conservation of the best and highest of our nature.

Remembering, then, that we may conceive an Infinite in whom is no cause for fear-feeling, the invitation is now that you join in the following affirmations without reservation:

The Infinite wills no misfortune into existence;
The Infinite wills no suffering in anyone;
The Infinite wills no poverty anywhere;
The Infinite wills no case of disease on earth;
The Infinite wills no death to any human.

We take up these affirmations in their order.

The Infinite Wills No Misfortune.

You are invited to substitute for the notion that any Superior Intelligence wills misfortune to any human, the thought, held positively and persistently, that the Primary Intention of the whole Universe is that each individual shall make the most of himself in a way consistent with the rights of others making toward the same goal. This Primary Intention is a universal right.

It means that the individual shall *himself make* the most of the self. No one but yourself can make the most of the self that is you. The most of the self cannot be a charity, a gift, an imposition. Each self is to make the most of *itself.*

To this end — the chosen, self-made most — the Universe and its Infinite are placed at the disposal of the self through harmony and demand by thought and appropriate activity. The self here is not some other particular self, but is *each* self throughout the whole Universe. The right to use the Universe and its Infinite for the most of self is universal and age-long. There are no favorites. The right exists prior to and behind all creeds, sects, schools, philosophies and civilization or pagan conditions.

If the Universe and its Infinite are placed at the disposal of every self for the best of self through harmony and demand, we conclude that: The Universe and the Infinite are *related to each individual by way of universal and uniform laws.* The System of laws runs on. By harmony and demand each individual may adjust to the laws, engage them in his own interest, and thus actually use the Universe and its Infinite in making the most of himself. On the other hand, the individual may come into disharmony with the laws

and thus use them for the injury of the self. Or, he may fail to adjust to the laws, and so miss making the most of himself.

Since human beings are related to one another, individuals who harmonize with the laws, or who disharmonize therewith, or who fail to engage them for the best of self, exert a corresponding influence over others by bringing upon them the consequences of their own engagement of the laws.

We cannot escape the first operation of this general sharing in the consequences of other people's methods of living. But we can *rise above* such consequences by asserting harmony with the laws for ourselves and by demanding for ourselves the most of self. Hence, we can really defeat the consequences by the same assertion and demand.

If misfortunes come to us *through others*, we can hold self in the attitude of harmony with the Universe and its Infinite, both in thought and in conduct, and in that state of harmony can call to ourselves health, prosperity, unfoldment and power by the law and force of demand, because the System of universal and uniform laws is placed at our disposal for precisely such an end. The factors of the System are: the laws, the placing of the System at our disposal by the Infinite within the System, our harmony and our demand. These factors are *inter-related;* they constitute a mutuality of action and reaction. They all work together "for good." The outcome is as inevitable as though the System were a mechanism.

If misfortune comes to you through *your own maladjustment* to laws, you can readjust, get back to harmony, and make your demands accordingly.

If the Universe and its Infinite constitute a System

of universal and uniform laws, and if the former are placed at our disposal through harmony and demand, we see that there can be no Will of Deity in the System that misfortune shall come to us. The only superior Will discoverable is that welfare shall be achieved by each through harmony and demand. This is the sole Will we have to consider, because we may rise above the consequences due to individual wills, as already indicated. Misfortune comes, not because of any Superior Will, so far as that is concerned, but because of our disharmony or lack of harmony or lack of demand. Such misfortune may be overcome by resort to the factors of demand and harmony.

If you question thus: Does not misfortune come for our *discipline?* the answer is properly as follows. Discipline through misfortune cannot be the intention of a System of laws existing for and placed at our disposal for the best of each self. We are to think of the Universe and its Infinite as a System of laws which bring to us good or ill precisely as we engage the laws rightly or wrongly. The idea of discipline is here out of place. Discipline can only be accomplished, in any event, by *return to harmony and demand.* But the thing *secured* by the unpleasant working of the laws in so-called discipline is not discipline, but is return to harmony and the making of right demands. Hence, the Will of the System is solely the most of each individual through demand and harmony. Discipline involves a special application of laws for a special purpose. The Universe and its Infinite do not so work, but operate only through universal and uniform laws. When you engage universal laws you particularize them in your behalf — for good or for ill. When you return to harmony you particularize universal laws for good

in your own case. In a System of laws which are only particularized through engagement by the individual, there are consequences, agreeable or disagreeable, but there is no discipline.

You are, therefore, invited to put altogether out of mind the notion that misfortune comes to you because of any Superior Will seeking to discipline you, and to emphasize the thought that the intention of the Universe-Infinite is your completest welfare through harmony and right demand,— clearly perceiving that misfortune means, if your own fault, not discipline, but a return to harmony, and means, if the fault of others, demand meeting the case through precisely the same condition, harmony with law.

The *value* of discipline, moreover, depends upon the *spirit* with which it is accepted. Such spirit, if it have value, is the spirit of harmony with the System. If we maintain, or return to, such spirit, the notion of discipline is useless. We may look upon the Universe as a System of laws conducted by the Immanent Infinite, the sole intention of which is welfare to all, and thus substitute for a misinterpreted and useless factor — discipline — the sheer working of the laws in our interest so long as we harmonize with them and demand welfare from them: and also in our interest when we are *out* of harmony with them because the working simply means a return to harmony.

Invitation. You are invited to unfold the courage which assumes responsibility for your own misfortunes, or for sharing the consequences of other people's living, since you may rise above them, but especially courageously to maintain or return to harmony and to demand welfare regardless of all present misfortune. For this is your birthright.

The Infinite Wills No Suffering.

All the preceding propositions apply equally to suffering.

In a System that is placed at the disposal of all, there can be no intention that any shall suffer: the intention must be precisely the opposite.

Suffering is an expression of disharmony. Intention in the System can never mean disharmony; hence, can never mean suffering. The value of suffering consists solely in its inducement of return to harmony. Suffering, then, is a *consequence of individual intention* in regard to law. The individual wills that which entails suffering because he wills that which induces or is disharmony. The Universe wills only the best of each self: that which entails, or is, happiness.

In the sense that the Universe and its Infinite constitute a System of laws, the System wills nothing, as a matter of fact. It is simply a psychic organism, operating "for" the welfare — the development of all the parts, according to their nature, inasmuch as such development signifies its own completeness. The word "for" expresses intention, but the intention goes to the Infinite in willing the Universe into existence and maintenance. The Infinite, then, willed and wills welfare of each through harmony and demand. Disharmony could not have been the original intention, nor suffering, which merely expresses disharmony. All suffering is due to some less than infinite will.

If suffering comes to an individual through other than his own will, the System is so placed at his disposal that he may by harmony and demand rise above it. If other people throw you into a state of disharmony, and so, of suffering, by their wills or by the consequences

of their willed action, it is yours to return to harmony, and by so much as you do this will you displace the suffering.

Invitation. You are invited, then, to unfold the courage which assumes responsibility, in the respects indicated, for your own suffering, but especially courageously to maintain, or return to, harmony by thought and conduct, with the laws of the Universe and its Infinite, not merely in their material aspects, but also in their psychic reality as subject to your wisdom-thought, and then courageously to demand happiness and welfare regardless of all present suffering and all other human wills whatsoever.

The Infinite Wills No Poverty.

All the preceding propositions apply equally to poverty.

I affirm inability to discover any advantage to any self issuing primarily from misfortune, suffering, poverty. The advantage supposed to come out of these experiences comes really and invariably from harmony and demand. In fact, these experiences are not usable by a Universe of laws pervaded by the Infinite; they are simply so much waste. The Universe can use harmony and demand alone, because these are provided for in its nature; but it can do nothing with misfortune, suffering, poverty, except to get rid of them. These experiences should no longer be permitted to play their ancient fear-role in human thought.

I affirm inability to see any virtue whatever in misfortune, suffering or poverty. All virtue inheres in harmony, as all power inheres in harmony and demand. There is nothing potent for good, nothing beautiful or divine, in poverty, just as there is nothing

weak, ugly or destructive in wealth. Potency for good, for beauty, for divineness inheres only in demand-harmony; and weakness, ugliness, destructiveness inhere in and issue from disharmony.

I affirm that each human self needs a great variety and sum-total of means for *self-expression* and for *unfoldment* to its most and best. The self develops itself; poverty in itself develops nothing desirable. It cramps and distorts, wherever it exists.

I affirm that wealth, taken in a reasonable sense, is one means for self-expression and unfoldment. I affirm equally that wealth, in itself, develops nothing: that it degrades and kills wherever it is valued for its own sake, or for the sake of mere gratification of the self. The self alone develops itself. If the self seeks reasonable wealth for the sake of expression and unfoldment through harmony and demand, it is then *realizing the intention of the System.*

There is wealth enough in the world for the comfort and development of each human to his possible best in this earth, and if there is not, no reason can be assigned for the excessive wealth of some and the excessive poverty of others — except the excessive selfishness of the one class, and the excessive ignorance and incompetence of the other class. The Infinite has nothing to do with these factors save to reform them in the long run of the centuries.

Poverty is out of order in the Universe, and cannot be charged to the will of the Infinite. If poverty is yours, do not imagine that it is in accord with any plan of a Superior will with regard to your life.

More and more will you see this general truth if you will proceed to cultivate an inner state of harmony with the Universe and its Infinite and to make *legal*

demands for the things that you need in order to the most and the best of the self.

Invitation. You are invited to unfold the courage that assumes responsibility for your own material possessions, and especially courageously to maintain or return to harmony with the System which belongs to you, and courageously to demand by thought and action all the wealth you require for the completest realization of your selfhood. "Be not faithless, but believe."

The Infinite Wills No Disease.

All the preceding propositions apply equally to disease.

The Infinite can will into existence in that Universe which the Infinite pervades and now-creates nothing save through universal and uniform laws — that is, its own ways of being and doing.

The Infinite can will into existence nothing contrary to its own nature — in such a Universe or out of it.

Disease is disharmony: of the individual psychic factor and, as result, of the body. Disease is always psychic disharmony. Physical disease may spring from disharmony of the self, or it may be induced by the disharmony of another self. But the diseased body, when its disharmony sets in, signifies then disharmony in the psychic self.

A true Infinite cannot will a Universe, diseased in any of its parts, into existence. The Infinite in no case can will disease into body or self. In a System of laws, disease will follow disharmony with the laws,— rather, will be such disharmony,— but can never be willed by the Source and Ground thereof, can never result from

a Superior Will, because such Will can only express a perfect Nature. The Infinite is in the Universe for harmony *only*. The primary will of the Infinite must have been harmony and health throughout the Universe. When the Infinite "went into" the Universe, the latter became a System of laws. The working of universal and uniform laws in a System whose goal is self-completeness can mean no other than harmony and health to all existences — so far as self-realization with reference to the System is concerned. The meaning of the expression of disharmony by disease is inducement to return to harmony. This is the sole intention of the System. Such return to harmony is ideally possible in every case, because the Universe and its Infinite are placed at the disposal of all equally for welfare-health through harmony and demand. The only limitation of this possibility is the practical ability of psychic factor here and now to achieve harmony adequate and to make demand powerful enough to swing the Universal Forces into the self for restoration of health. This practical limit we can only know by experience.

We are to-day making rapid progress in realizing harmony and using the power of demand, so that already the psychic and physical *tonus* is increasing: disease is being conquered, and the *opsonic index* — resisting power — is rising higher and higher with every century. The significance of these facts points to the final conquest of disease throughout the whole earth. This is the Will of the Infinite, and none other.

Invitation. You are invited to unfold the courage to assume the responsibility for your own disease — at least, not to charge the Infinite therewith, because the origin and the continuance of disease are alto-

gether matters of law; and especially to maintain or return to harmony with a good Universe and to demand in that harmony health of body, health of mind, health of the whole self. "Be not faithless, but believe."

The Infinite Wills No Death.

"God is the God of the living, not the dead." The living live because of life in psychic factor, which merely expresses in body. The living are not yesterday-people; they are all to-day-people. Life is contemporaneous always. Living in a body decides not life. Living outside a body decides not life. Life is life under all conditions.

Yielding a body and going "elsewhere" induces no change in real life or in character and its expressions. These are products of experience, and experience may not be confined to life in body. I hold that death does no one either harm or good, since it is merely the cessation of a certain organized kind of life in a definite body and cannot possibly affect the character and its expressions in what we call the higher life.

Death is not an entity. Death *is* no thing, *does* no thing. It simply represents what some actual reality has done: departed, as the sea departs from the bay at ebb, as the wind departs from the landscape at sunset. The sea and the wind return — and who shall say that this other departing something, life physical, may not return if the higher psychic life should require?

This departure or transition does not affect the psychic life, which is individualized personal intelligence in action, for the departure concerns and occurs only on the physical plane. If there be spiritual death,

then we have cessation in individual form of the individual personal intelligence.

Physical death cannot be the will of the Infinite in Nature, for "by sin came death," and death being a consequence of disharmony, it cannot be charged to That whose only will can be harmony. If disharmony is no part of the "plan," death can be no part thereof.

Spiritual death cannot be the will of the Infinite in the Universe, because it only ensues from individual will of disharmony in the individual.

Disease and death express disharmony in a Universe intended for harmony only. The universal and uniform laws of the Universe and its Infinite work for harmony; they do not work for anything other or less. Hence, only health expresses the nature of things, which death never does nor can express. The nature of things means harmony; it cannot possibly mean disharmony — which is a disorganization of the nature of things. If disharmony is such disorganization, disease and death are so. Life only is natural. Death is unnatural, because it is the outcome of disharmony, which is contrary to the nature of things. "By sin came death."

The law of inertia is psychic no less than material. A body at rest remains so, a body in motion continues so, unless acted upon by some outside influence. This is true of psychic factor: it remains what it is except as reaction unfolds it. Growth of any sort, once begun, must continue until arrested. Physical life is a closed circuit, only broken by *interior* action *not natural* and caused by *external* action upon it. Life cannot contain within itself the principle of self-destruction, for then life is a contradictory compound of life and death. Life, once begun and existing in con-

ditions perfectly adapted to it, must continue forever. Immortality means life-perpetuating conditions, but nothing whatever *added to* life. Life is immortal until slain. It cannot die of itself. This truth is fundamental and unassailable.

The Infinite cannot slay life arrived at moral personality, because the Infinite is not an arbitrary Existence outside the Universe, but is a law-respecting, that is, a self-respecting Ground of the Universe, and any provision for such slaughter would be a universal law contradictory of the System and the nature of the Infinite, which must aim for life, not for death, and can *permit death* only as *life destroys itself*. Death is of no value to the individual or the System, for it is disharmony or the result of disharmony, which in nature is the opposite of value. Death is really an interference with the value of life. The Infinite wills continuing and unfolding life through harmony and demand, and when death occurs it is result of disharmony, and so, contrary to the will of the Infinite.

The meaning of the System of universal and uniform laws is a Universe in harmony among all its parts. The System, then, does not provide for death; it only provides for harmony, and so, for life where life is natural, and when disharmony ensues, it is altogether unnatural and contrary to the System.

In due time man will understand himself and his Universe, conquer disease by harmony and demand, and banish death itself from the face of the earth.

Those who say: "It is natural to die," also affirm by the statement: "It is natural to sin." The exact opposites are true. It is unnatural to "sin" and to die. "By sin came death." The only natural thing in this regard is harmony, which is life.

A great Western Book has much to say about the conquest and destruction of death. It is a poor conquest and no destruction if death can only disappear after all the living have died. A like victory over a conflagration would obtain when all consumable material had been consumed. No man can triumph over death in the full sense by dying: however valiently he may meet and pass through the experience, the one fact remains — that death has conquered the man. One can conquer the *fear* of death and yet yield to the *fact* of death, but death is really conquered only when it is obviated. Death can only be destroyed in the world of human beings by being banished from that world as a fact of experience. And it can only be so banished by as much as living beings develop the power to live and not die.

As disease is now measurably being conquered by being obviated, through increase of power to live harmoniously and so to practically and successfully demand health, there is thus speaking to-day a prophesy that ultimately man shall be able to live without disease. So measurably is death being banished through the developing power of life. There is to come to earth a time when death shall cease, not because all men are then dead, but because all living men shall have become so perfectly alive that no natural power can break the circuit of life — leaving only violence and accidents as instruments of death. In such a stage human violence will be impossible because of universal harmony, and human wisdom will prove adequate to all other forms of violence and to all accident.

The fact that death, as an experience, yet remains calls merely for such inner harmony of thought and

external harmony of action that the event, while being naturally repulsive to normal life, may still be contemplated with equanimity in the all-conquering consciousness that not even death itself can touch the living spirit. In the meantime, it is wisdom to live rightly and forget the "enemy."

Invitation. You are invited to unfold the courage which in harmony fears not death, to hold that death is never the will of the Infinite, and to believe and live for the ultimate actual, not fictitious theological, conquest and destruction of disease and death among the living inhabitants of earth and Universe. It is every human's right to live as though death had already been truly conquered.

If, now, we see that not misfortune, suffering, poverty, disease nor death can be the will of the Infinite, but precisely the contrary experiences are its will; that the will of the Infinite it is only that each should make the most of himself through harmony and demand, the Universe itself being placed at our disposal therefor, all cause for fear concerning Deity, or for any other than wisdom-thought in regard to the Infinite, must disappear totally from mind and life.

THE FEAR OF HELL.

The Idea of Hell — a perennial Thought of all ages —
Betrays, like the shadow of a man building a wall unending,
The soul and its work and the Sun overhead.
The shadow contains the man
And the shadow outlines the wall,
And the shadow reveals where the sun is,
With the passing of light and degrees of the same.

The wall-building goes on forever;
For into this work man builds all the best and the worst of him,
Across "country"— the ages of human existence.
And so, hell's shadow companions the worker,
Since he fashions the fact and since sun ne'er forsakes him.

Behold, then: Is hell, now, a curse of the Infinite Sun?
Is the thought of it other than fact of that Light
Flung athwart the poor builder and wall,
Casting shadow-revealer of the Perfect and imperfect,
As every shadow 's revealer of sun and of no-sun,
And so, the mere creation of soul in its progress?

Ever the Light is;
Ever the man builds across "country."
Let the builder be as the Light:
Then shall the wall also be light —
Then shall the sun blaze *within* the man,
And the man, one with Sun,
Shall himself be light — the shadow vanished.

The fear of all hells is the fear of the self;
And the courage that banishes fear
Is the light of the soul transparent to Light —
Whose work is clear.

— The Author.

CHAPTER XVII.

Fears in Religion for Devils and Hell.

"Man must pit his microcosm against the macrocosm, and he must not be discouraged."— *J. A. Thomson.*

IDEA is power. Affirmation making for self-conservation is power of idea for good. Conceive such idea as universal: the idea is then immensely complex, building a Universe. We may call this the Infinite Idea,—"*I Am*,"— predicating itself infinitely in Eternal Active Consciousness and Eternal Active Expression. The outcome in our thought is now: Everlasting Being everlastingly creative of Good.

But the affirmation carries possibility of its reverse, Negation. In its essence Negation always contradicts Affirmation, but forever tends to deception in the guise of Affirmation, and so, tends always to agree with the latter in appearance.

When the finite attains consciousness, the possibility inherent in Affirmation to reverse itself and deceive in Negation finds opportunity for realization, and life, instead of being all affirmation of that which truly is, good, develops the negative idea; and, since the negative idea is essentially deceptive and contradiction of the real affirmative, it assumes the form of the affirmative for evil. Idea is power; that is, it is dynamic for expression. The Infinite Idea is constructive and cannot realize the negative, since this is the non-existent, and so, cannot be deceived into affirmation of Negation.

But the finite idea, because it is limited consciousness and more or less ignorant, realizes the possibility of the affirmative *in* the negative. This means that it develops dynamic idea of evil and *affirms evil into idea.* The evil idea, in countless forms, becomes dynamic because it is entertained. Since evil is now affirmed, thought seeks to account for it, and does so in the one Idea — an Eternal Evil Principle, or a Supreme Malevolent Power.

A Sovereign Demon is man's personification of mere Negation. It is the Dynamic Idea of Negation affirmed as a Power in fact. If man's evil ideas — which are always essential negations of good — could not become dynamic,— become will-ideas, ideas inducing action,— man would never have conceived of a Personal Devil. It is, in fact, because the possibility of evil can become a realization in finite consciousness, that the negations can become ideas, and so, dynamic, and so, dominant in the general concept, a Personal Demon of unlimited power.

We may discuss the fear-subject of devils in four divisions.

I. *The Devil-Idea is Ancient.* The history of the Devil-Idea may be traced in certain words in language and certain origins in religion.

The word "devil" has come to us from the Greek *Diabolos*, "The Slanderer": *dia*, "across," and *ballein*, "to throw." *Ballein* also gave *bolemnon*, "a dart." Thus emerges the Satan of the Dark Ages.

This idea has abacinated the whole world — *blinded man* as with a *hot iron.*

Now, "the blood that runs through our thoughts — our language — is the same as that of the Aryans of India.

"We know that the only real historical background for the religion, the mythology and the laws of the Greeks and Romans has been discovered in the fragments of the common stock of words of the Aryan nations.

"In comparing Indian religion and mythology with the religion and mythology of the Greeks and Romans, Celts and Teutons, the common Aryan leaven could still be clearly perceived as working in all of them."

And "if we compare the ancient religious and philosophical ideas of India with those of Persia, we have to admit not only what may be called an underlying community of language, but an historical community between the ancestors of Indians and Persians that lasted long after the other Aryan nations had been finally separated."

For knowledge of the Indian and Persian religions and languages we look to the *Vedas*, the holy books of the ancient Hindus, and the *Avesta-Zend*, the sacred writings of the religion of Zarathustra, or Zoroaster.

"All this is true and justifies us in speaking of a common Aryan atmosphere pervading the philosophy of Greeks and Hindus — a common, though submerged stratum of thought from which alone the materials, whether stone or clay, could be taken with which to build the later temples of religion."

In the Indian, Persian, Greek and Hebrew religions man's thought in time rose to the conception of one Supreme Deity. The *Vedic Hymns* said: "He who above all Gods is the only God." A Greek writer, Xenophanes, declared: "There is but one God, and neither in form nor in thought like unto mortals." Zoroaster held, for the Persians, that *Ahura Mazda* was

"the creator of the earthly and spiritual life, the Lord of the whole Universe, in whose hands are all creatures," and that "he not only rewards the good, but he is the punisher of the wicked at the same time. *All that is created, good or evil, fortune or misfortune, is his work.*"

But it seems that *Ahura* may have come from *ah*, "to be,"— in the Aryan, *as*, "to be." In the Hebrew Testament, Deity is (just once) called, in answer to a question put by Moses, "*I Am That I Am.*" Zoroaster also asked *Ahura Mazda* to reveal the greatest of his many names, and the answer was: "The first name is *Ahmi*, "*I Am.*" The Aryan (or Sanscrit) for "I am" was *as-mi*.

Thus comes to man, from the idea of *being* and the ideas of *good* and *evil*, the conception of a Deity who was the *author of good and evil.*

The ideas of good and evil may have at first represented two Powers, which were combined later into one, or, the notion of one Power, which was source "at one time" of good and evil, may have been subsequently divided, yielding, again, two Powers.

In the *Avesta-Zend* literature, which arose after the *Vedic*, *Ahura-Mazda* finally got clear of evil and became the supreme Good Deity, who was constantly opposed by *Ahriman*, the Evil Spirit, the Spirit of Darkness.

"At first these two creative spirits were conceived only as two parts or ingredients of the Divine Being," but "this doctrine of Zoroaster's became corrupted in the course of time by misunderstandings and false interpretations." *Spenta Mainyu*, the Beneficent Spirit, was taken as a name (exclusively) of *Ahura-Mazda* himself, and the *Angra-Mainyu*, by becoming entirely

separated from *Ahura-Mazda*, was then regarded as the constant adversary of *Ahura-Mazda*.

"The same process of changing certain qualities of the Divine Being into separate beings can be clearly matched in the case of the *Ameshaspentas*. The *Ameshaspentas* of the *Avesta* are literally 'the immortal benefactors.' These were clearly at first mere qualities of the Divine Being, or gifts which *Ahura-Mazda* might grant to his worshippers, but they became afterwards angelical or half-divine beings, such as *Vohn mano*, 'Good Mind,' *Asha vahishta*, 'the Best Truth;' and so on. (There were six of them.)

"As these angels formed in later times the great council of *Ormazd* (*Ahura-Mazda*), *Ahriman* (the adversary) also was supposed to be surrounded by a similar council of six." They were *Akem mano*, "the Evil Spirit," *Indra*, *Saurva*, *Naon-haitha*, and two personifications of darkness and poison.

In the *Avesta* of the Persians *Ahriman* and his bad angels fight against *Ahura-Mazda* and his good angels. But in the earlier *Veda* of the Indians *Asu-ra*, God, is opposed by the *A-suras*, the non-gods. We can see how the evil qualities came to be dissociated from the Good Deity and to be misconceived as entities or evil gods.

"In this way the ancient Persian religion offers many points of similarity with the belief in God and his angels, and in a devil also, as we find in the later portions of the Old Testament. From thence this belief was transferred to the New Testament, and is still held by many as dogma."

II. *The Devil-Idea is a Human Creation.* The preceding study suggests the following conclusion: That man began early to ask the meaning of things;

that his explanations filled the world with gods; that good and evil in life needed to be accounted for; that either these came to mean two opposite divine forces in one Being, or two hostile Personalities; that each Personality (in man's thought) obtained a Court, the one of angels, the other of demons; that each ruled in his own place — Heaven for one, Hell for the other; and that "the kingdoms of this world" were shared, though in conflict, by these mighty Powers.

Thus, in the sense of conceiving, man has created his own Gods (God-Ideas) and all his own devils (devil-ideas). This means, be it understood, that man has *had* to form his conceptions within his own mind, *not that he has given absolute existence to the Infinite, on the one hand, or to a real Devil, on the other hand; not that no good or evil powers exist at all independently of man's thought about them.*

Man has created the Universe-thought which he knows, not the Infinite's Thought-Universe which exists independently of man's knowing. So, man has created his God-thoughts and his Devil-thoughts, but not the realities which these thoughts seek to represent.

It does not follow, as remarked in the preceding chapter, that, because man creates his God-thought, no real God exists. We assume here that a real Infinite does exist, without useless discussion.

But, it equally does not follow that, simply *because* man has created his God-thought, a real Infinite does exist. The universality of the God-Idea has its weight, but it is not conclusive. We hold to the Infinite Reality on other grounds.

And it does not follow that, because man has created his own Devil-Idea, a real Devil must exist. Neither, moreover, does it follow from the same fact

that there is no actual Devil. Various considerations, such as those indicated in the opening paragraphs, and others, of this chapter, lead to the conclusion that

There is no Supreme Devil.

It is wholly evident, to take a further step, that two Infinites cannot be admitted in our thought. Such Infinites are in our thought so mutually exclusive and contradictory as to destroy for thought either the one or the other. The conclusion represents our mental constitution.

The one true Infinite must be "good," because our thought feels that the Infinite must be constructive and conservative. Only good is so. Evil is destructive — always.

The true Infinite cannot be regarded as evil,— that which is destructive, the contradiction of the Infinite's Self. The Infinite cannot create that which essentially — totally — differs from its own nature.

The Infinite cannot create another Infinite, for this would be self-destructive and contradictory. The Infinite cannot create other beings as absolutely perfect as itself, since this would mean other Infinites. The Infinite can create only that which is *relatively* perfect, as innocent and capable of good, yet imperfect as regards the *absolute standard* — the Infinite Self.

The Infinite is obligated by its nature to create no evil, since this is impossible; to create personality (if at all) not evil but capable of good; and not good without capability of evil, since such personality only can be free, therefore real and possessed of powers of growth, since a non-growable personality is not personal.

All created beings issue from the Infinite as *relatively* perfect and imperfect.

We define *good* as "self-conservative personal action," and *evil* as "self-destructive personal action." Good conserves good, and evil conserves evil, but the conservation does not in both cases run to personality. Good conserves good and personality, while evil conserves evil but destroys personality.

Personality involves possibility for good *or* for evil; for action that is self-conservative *or* for action that is self-destructive. The Infinite can only create personality that is not evil (is innocent) *because* it is capable of good and has *not* expressed capability of evil, but cannot create personality that is good *without* capability of evil, because it *is* personal.

It is error to regard good and evil, and "sin," as entities, having existence in themselves. There is no good apart from some person acting in a good way — that is, in a way that is conservative of a non-self-destructive self. The Supreme Good is an activity or complex of activities of a Supreme non-self-destructive Intelligence that is infinite. There is no "sin" apart from persons that "sin." Were all "sin"-actions (mental or otherwise) eliminated from the Universe, this would not mean that some mysterious entity, "Sin," had taken its flight, but would mean simply that all beings in the Universe had ceased "sin"-action. There is no evil apart from some person acting in an evil way, that is, in a way that is self-destructive.

Evil being action self-destructive to personality, its origin must be sought in beings who have begun existence as perfect relatively but as imperfect as regards the absolute standard of their own nature. No being can conceivably act self-destructively with full knowledge of all the consequences of such action. Self-destructive action — evil — must, then, spring

from some degree of ignorance. Evil has no eternal existence, but is temporal and finite and due always to ignorance in some degree.

All evil beings are results in part of ignorant, self-destructive activity, mental or otherwise.

If devils exist, there is no infinite and eternal principle of evil, and there is no next-to-infinite-and-eternal Sovereign Evil Power.

The Infinite, since it is the Infinite, is either obligated by its own nature to permit the laws of personality so to act that evil personalities shall finally suicide out of the Universe,— the event being totally unwilled but unpreventable by the Infinite,— or so obligated to continue to act upon all personalities that ultimately all shall learn and profit by the lessons of experience and attain the life of good — acting then only conservatively of self.

I hold to a final evil-less, deathless, perfect Universe.

We conclude, then, that devils are beings who have created their own devil-nature, and that conceptions of such are products of man's own thinking.

III. *Evil Intelligences Possible in a Spiritual Universe.* We may conceive of the Universe as "material" only. In this theory personality is merely a manifest of material activities. Neither Deity nor Devil, angels nor demons, good souls nor bad souls, truly exist. The System is wholly composed of atoms or ions or "peculiarities" of the ether, and force. The human is no more an actual self than is a quartz crystal. When the *so-called* human "knows" this to be true (though how it can know is a mystery), it can have no questions about anything — to say nothing about answers to questions. The finality is, that life comes

to a standstill for "mind," since "mind" is a *determined* product of the interaction of matter and force. Finally, matter and force cannot be affirmed, because no mind is left to affirm them. This material conception is not a real conception at all; it is simply a *determined somewhat* (condition) of *those things which cannot be affirmed.* We have all disappeared in *nihilism.* And we are not really able to disappear, since *nihilism* itself is a conclusion with nothing left to infer it. This notion has poor fortune in thought. It cannot argue; it can only stubbornly pretend — with a *mind* that absolutely disproves its pretensions.

The spiritual conception holds that the Universe exhibits Intelligence. This gives reality standing-ground. We actually exist as selves manifest in bodies.

This conclusion makes it conceivable that other intelligences than ourselves really exist, unseen as well as seen, on this earth, and possibly on other planets.

"Many systems may be conceived as possible. Our human world, when we look at it carefully, has after all a large element of relativity. We look upon its contents and rightly view them as objective, that is, as independent of our human wills. But when we inquire into its contents we find that they largely consist of our own sense-life put into rational forms, yet in such a way that if we should conceive the sense-elements dropped out, it might be exceedingly difficult to tell what remains. Take away the sense-qualities and the resistances and distances, and we should find nothing left that we could call a world; and so, however much we may regard this human world of ours as being objectively founded, we must nevertheless query whether it be not after all a certain human world only, and of such a sort that we are not able to affirm

it to have any existence for beings who might be differently constituted in their sensuous nature. The world of ether, for instance, is not adjusted to our senses" (this means not adjusted as matter is adjusted) "and it has therefore only a theoretical" (this means conceptual) "existence for us. We cannot make anything out of it for ourselves beyond a somewhat obscure assistant of our optical equations" (this is narrow — for we do affect the ether indirectly and it serves beyond the optical phase, as in electricity); "and, on the other hand, many of our solid things are seen to be practically transparent for various influences which we seem to detect" (as in the case of radio-activity). "It is, therefore, by no means an impossible thought that the things which are solid for us might be vacua for others, and the things which are vacua for others might be solid for us."

"This leads to the surmise that there may be widely different systems of reality for beings who are differently constituted, or for the same beings in different stages of their development. Being in this world means nothing more than having a certain form and type of experience with certain familiar conditions. Passing out of this world into another would mean simply, not a transition through space, but passing into a new form and type of experience differently conditioned from the present; and how many of those systems are possible, or to what extent this change would go, is altogether beyond us."

We have, then, in this conception, a Universe which is a manifest to us of Infinite Intelligence, and which suggests other inter-acting Universes which are manifests to other beings by the same Infinite Intelligence.

That these manifests are, for the most part, closed from perfectly free inter-communication between the inhabitants of each with each, would seem to follow from the conditions conceived for such differing systems. But the general conception makes natural the idea that all beings belong in the one manifest complex of Systems, and that, since the beings are intelligences, and, psychologically speaking, since all intelligences must be in essence fundamentally alike, they may, under favorable conditions, impress or influence beings of systems other than their own. Thus, as here we influence one another without employing the common senses, so may we influence, in similar ways, other beings of other systems, and so may the latter influence us.

It is this conception of the Universe in which we live that makes room for beings who are ignorant and do evil like men, which we would call devils, and other beings who have won greater knowledge and power and do good, which we would call angels, being, in some essential personal way, like men also. If we think of such evil beings as *resembling ourselves in respect to their ignorance and evil propensities*, just as criminals who do evil resemble us in their essential human nature, and *not* as mighty beings with whom we have little if any resemblance,— inconceivably malevolent and hopeless forever,—if we can thus view such evil beings called devils, we not only have room for them in our thought, but we are forefended against their influence precisely as we are forefended against the evil influence of bad men — by the exercise of our will and the repelling power of our thought.

Thus it is perfectly legitimate, so far as sound reasoning is concerned, to hold that the early religious

creation of devils and angels was an attempt on the part of man to interpret the facts of evil and good, and that back of the facts which he saw existed the tremendous Drama of a complex Universe — worlds within worlds — struggling on toward its final goal of completeness.

But this view eliminates the pernicious elements of superstition. We have seen that the so-called superstitions of one age may become truths in another age. The present conception is a case in point. Superstition did reign in the old notions of hell fire and a Supreme Devil who was almost as powerful as the Infinite and to whom the great World's-Man had to pay the sacrifice of his physical life,— in all the occult elements of imps and demons with hoofs and forked tails,— with the Great White Throne and the happy, foolish saints and angels doing nothing save extract ecstacy from environment forever. But the conception suggested in this chapter, while it may be error, does not belong to the class, superstition, because it is not only rational as conceivable but is consistent with what we do know concerning our present existence and the influence which men and women actually exert upon one another.

IV. *Fear of Devils, Therefore, Gratuitous.* The view here presented makes fear of devils as wholly gratuitous as is the fear of men. The demand of self-preservation in either case is simply *wisdom* and the *highest motive* in life. In fact, fear for men is vastly more justifiable than is fear for devils and imps and so-called "elementals." Men may injure one another by speech and force, but *neither men nor devils may do injury through "occult" or other channels to any being whose gateway to the soul or self is closed by will and*

motive. Thus, stripping the demons of the fantastic forms and powers with which imagination has invested them, and reducing them to intelligences having the essential nature that we have, who are bent on evil because, like some humans, they are perverted, ignorant, and mentally acute in evil, we come to a principle which is a guaranty of courage in this whole matter of influence and subjection, as follows:

Reason Affords its Own Immunity to Evil.

The goal of all existence must be self-completeness.

In a Universe such as our own, every operation of which, as we believe, expresses the *law of reason* (ignorant intelligences, of course, excepted), *the integrity of the systems that compose it demands that each system shall be conducted substantially without interference with its own nature or the activities which tend to realize its final completeness.* The only exception to this demand appears when such interference is *provided* for or is *made possible by* that nature. Interference in this case merely makes for completeness relatively and in an indirect manner. Subordinations of lower life to higher would be illustrations.

If our Universe expresses the law of reason, other possible Universes must do the same. Each Universe, and each system therein, is immune to foreign interference not made possible by its nature in the interest of its own self-completeness. The nature of man makes *possible* various interferences from unseen intelligences, but the *possibility* obtains only in the interest of human development.

If the law of reason operates to destroy any existence, that fact defines completeness for such existence. In Nature destruction of individuals, and per-

haps of systems, constantly occurs by outside interference, but these destructions serve the interests of other existences or other systems.

Were *service* not the outcome of such destructions by the operation of the law of reason, evolution would be impossible. If it is true that only the fittest survives, it is equally true that the struggle of things is toward fitness to survive. Evolution expresses the law of reason, as does life, which is, in fact, the inmost reason of existence. Taken in the larger sense, natural destructions have always secured higher existences. If we can know the ultimate goal of evolution, we can know the limit of such destructions and their final reason.

Since we are ourselves minds, and since we can conceive nothing superior to mind, we conclude that all interferences and destructions in Nature which are due to Nature's workings alone are limited to and made possible for the ultimate realization of the powers inherent in mind.

Mind is a phase of what we call person. We may say that person, in the human sense, is: first, a *system;* secondly, a system of *activities*, physical, subconscious and conscious; thirdly, a system of activities which are initiated, established, and developed through *interaction* of the self with the Universe around it — the system coming to self-completeness, in part, through such interaction; and fourthly, a system of activities which in part comes to self-completeness through *conscious communion* with persons of the finite order, and, in higher development, with that Supreme Personality which we call the Infinite Self.

Now, psychologically speaking, all persons, finite and infinite, must be essentially alike in nature or fundamental reality, as we have suggested in the pre-

ceding chapter. The finite person has the same *essence* as the infinite, but is *individualized* in that its being has *locus* and is limited. The Infinite Personality has the same essence as the finite, but is not individualized in the sense that it is not limited in being and in placeness. In the sense that individuality is self-identity, selfness as not any other self, the Infinite is individual, as is the human self. But the Infinite is not individual as limited. Nevertheless, it is not possible to conceive of two essentially different psychological *kinds* of personality — two sorts of person-essence. Whatever consciousness, thinking, feeling, willing are, they must be everywhere essentially the same kinds of activities, issuing from the same *kind* of source. Such activities may differ in completeness of realization — operation and development — and in moral character, but the difference cannot affect the fundamental nature of person. The self-being behind the activities is beyond our analysis, but we cannot conceive that intelligent self-being is anywhere throughout the Universe other than one kind of existence. This conclusion does not identify the finite and the Infinite personalities; on the contrary, it distinguishes them as Source and derived, as Creator and created. Finite and Infinite Personalities differ in individuality and character, but not in essence of being.

The highest completeness of person is realized in character — which is the sum-total of qualities of being secured through activities that are not self-destructive but are conservative of the self. Character, in the finite, then, is of the same nature as character in the Infinite.

We conclude that all destructions and interferences in our Universe that are due to the nature of things are finally limited by the suggested goal: full psychic

development and relatively perfect finite character patterned after the Infinite character so far as we can conceive the latter.

Observe the conclusion. There can be no interference foreign to person which violates this demand of the law of reason. By so much as you thoroughly understand this proposition, and accept it, by so much do you find yourself on solid ground, free, as you will to be free, from the whole mass of superstitions that have filled man with fear, and possessed of power guaranteeing absolute safety from evil humans and devilish demons.

But this proposition needs squaring with certain familiar facts. We therefore continue:

The human person is not a closed system. We do not know that such closed systems exist. All systems seem to be more or less open to the influence or action of other systems.

Into the human person-system come constantly many things, as, from the world of sense through the sense-organs. That is to say: the world is outside the self and it excites within us mental reactions which we call sight, hearing, thought, and so on. We cannot help this external action upon us, and should not wish to do so if we would be really human. Nevertheless, we can regulate the matter for all practical purposes, in the interest of best mental and physical life and of character, by simple exercise of will and cultivation of right motives.

Into the human person-system come many other things also, as, from the world of persons whose thought and the influences of whose actions and character are conveyed to us by means which in our ignorance we call "occult," but which must be perfectly natural, in

accord with the laws and realities of the Universe, since such laws are universal and uniform. We are affected by these influences, because we have the power to interpret their action upon the brain through the ether in which we exist, just as we interpret the action of the sense-world upon that organ through the nervous system. Thus, we cannot avoid this "occult" action upon us, and should not wish to do so if we would be really human. Nevertheless, we can control our response to such action for all practical purposes, as we will, by simple exercise of volition and cultivation of right motives in life.

The controlling factors are, in both cases, the *practical life* and the *ideal of moral character*. Thus, we may be assured by the truth that

Devil-Fears are Obviated by Life.

This two-fold control operates as follows: The action both of the sense-world and of "occult" influences of persons makes appeal to the subconscious and the conscious phases of the self. Before the action, in either case, can be effective, it must *become thought or feeling in some potent form and degree*. Only in the latter event can we respond to the appeal. We cannot always be consciously and alertly on guard in this matter, and control, therefore, must be so *established* that it will work "of itself," so to speak, when we are "off guard" so far as the conscious will is concerned. Let us observe certain factors in such control.

Education Safeguarding against Evil Influences. Such established guard is secured through the education of the self *automatically and instantly to repel any thought or feeling which experience or intuition declares will make against highest self-interest.*

This education is secured by action of will and cultivation of the highest known moral motives. The function of will here is to act *immediately and without hesitation or dalliance* whenever influences are felt that threaten ideal selfhood. The motives may be suggested as follows:

Motives of Self-conserving Character Safeguarding Against Evil Influences. 1. The motive that seeks always, fearless of all consequences, the *truth*, the *whole truth*, and *nothing but the truth*, pertaining to the best interests of the self;

2. The motive that seeks that ideal of character which you would willingly see made *law for the whole race of* men;

3. The motive that seeks that practical wisdom which discerns and ignores the mysterious, the fantastic, the impracticable, and manages to achieve *practical living on high* levels notwithstanding various theoretical differences among people concerning mere details;

4. The motive that seeks always the *courage* of your best convictions and the *convictions* of your best courage;

5. The motive that seeks *absolute trust that the Universe* in which you live *will see you through*, on the basis of the above purposes, to a *successful career* and to the completest realization of the self in that career.

Observe the outcome. On the assumption, then, that we live in worlds seen and unseen, and that there are evil spirits as well as evil men, this conception that the human person necessarily possesses the power to close itself against or to repel all malevolent influences and beings, guarantees and grounds the proposition, which you are invited to accept and use by assuming and asserting it and resolutely living up to it —

I believe in the immunity of the human spirit to any evil not self-induced.

The Invitations (*a*) If, however, you do not at all believe in the existence of personal evil spirits, you are invited to seek truth, ideal wisdom and courage as above suggested for a perfect safeguard against evil influences proceeding from living *human beings* around you in the present world.

(*b*) If you believe that evil spirits exist, you are invited to examine the notions of them given on a preceding page, and, at all events, to cease thinking, as the old orthodox doctrines implied, that a Supreme Devil is wellnigh as powerful as the Infinite, ruling over the largest part of this world against the rightful Sovereign, and ultimately to reign undisputed and victorious over an eternal hell of torment and despair.

(*c*) You are invited to adopt as a principle in life the formula, taken from the "*Yasna*" of Zarathustra's religion after Zoroaster had seceded from the *Vedic* religion and had come to regard the *Devas*—the *Vedic* good gods—as the *Devas*, the evil gods of the forsaken religion.

"I forsake the *Devas* (the devils), the wicked, bad, wrongful originators of mischief, the most baneful, destructive, and basest of beings. I forsake the *Devas* and those like *Devas*, the sorcerers and those like sorcerers, and any beings whatever of such kinds. I forsake them with thoughts, words and deeds, I forsake them hereby publicly, and declare that all lies and falsehood are to be done away with."

The Fears of Hell.

Ideas of hells develop historically along with ideas of evil spirits — unless the notion of successive rein-

carnations makes the hells adumbrations of previous experiences.

The doctrine of "incarnations" seems to hold both to *pre*-incarnations and *re*-incarnations. The fact of pre-incarnations can neither be disproven nor proven, and the value of pre-incarnations seems to be destroyed by the actual situation on earth: we already exist, and need no former existence to account for our present being. Since I really did begin at conception, my present being calls for no previous beginning. As to character, the elemental conditions and tendencies that combine with will and development to make character are all accounted for by the laws of heredity. Incarnations subsequent to the present stage of existence are involved as necessary phases of the doctrine of immortality — at least, so far as to reach transition into one other sphere of action. This subject, however, is altogether beyond us, and, therefore, should inspire no fear calling for present discussion.

Wherever religion has had a true voice, it has declared for "rewards" and "punishments" after death. On both subjects imagination has played freely, and, since superstition has suggested, in connection with them, ten thousand things to the limit, man has always built the kind of heaven that his mental conditions have called for and the kind of hell that has been conditioned by his mental demands.

The ideas of rewards and punishments are perfectly natural. Said Plato: "Now we must believe the legislator when he tells us that the soul is in all respects superior to the body, and that even in life what makes each one of us to be what we are is only the soul; and that the body follows us about in the likeness of each of us, and therefore, when we are dead, the bodies of

the dead are rightly said to be our shades or images; for the true and immortal being of each one of us, which is called the soul, goes on her way to other gods, that before them she may give an account — an inspiring hope to the good, but very terrible to the bad, *as the law of our fathers tells us.*"

The "law of our fathers" is sole authority for the dogma of an endless hell.

"This dogma, which held so large a place in the Middle Ages, had its birth in the religious, materialistic imaginations of barbarous peoples. The realistic descriptions of the 'Inferno' and 'Paradise Lost' are anticipated and rivaled by those in Plutarch and Plato and Josephus. The Jews obtained their doctrine apparently from the Persians." In other words, the idea of hell goes back far into antiquity. For centuries it has reigned in a world of fear because the "law of our fathers" has supported it. But that magician which transforms the thought of the past, the "atmosphere" of reason, is slowly displacing this idea by an examination which finds it impossible in a Universe whose existence depends on the now-creative Thought of an Infinite Intelligence.

An Eternal Hell Impossible.

The only hell of which we have certain knowledge is located within the self of person, and is caused by fear, ignorance, weakness, and disharmony among the powers of self and with the Universe in which we live. Contrary to ancient notions, this hell does not essentially depend for its horror upon mere feeling. The old ideas emphasized not so much disharmony as pain in their descriptions of hells — as though the "places of torment" might be other than hells were the pain re-

movable. Utter disharmony without pain is conceivable. Pain is a factor of warning where reform is possible, so far as the nature of things is concerned, and total disharmony may paralyze the power of pain. Pain has no other function than that of warning of disharmony; its continuation beyond possibility of reform is a useless remainder. Hell is disorganized selfhood. Said Satan, in "Paradise Lost:"

> "'Me miserable. Which way shall I fly
> Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
> Which way I fly is hell; *myself am hell.*'"

The word "hell" meant originally "a hidden place," and is allied to "cell," from *celare*, "to hide;" from the Aryan root, *kal*, "to cover." In astronomy there is no "down" to hell and no "up" to heaven. The modern hell has, therefore, to be located, so far as "place" is concerned, on or in some planet of this or another Universe. Even as thus located, the hell cannot be the "place," for space is a mental creation and hell is a mental or personal condition, and can be no other than the "within" of person. A hell in *place*, but without inhabitants is a contradiction of words. If like drifts to like in our life here, we conclude that such "within"-hells gravitate together in any sphere of existence. Hells locate themselves.

The question of "place," therefore, is of no importance whatever in our thought. "Absolute zero" would serve as well at some icy pole as "untellable heat" in the "bowels" of the earth or the sun. Descriptions of hell have always been influenced by climate.

The "within"-hell can no more be questioned than can real pain in our life; better, than can actual disharmony of the self with self and the Universe; than

can disease, ignorance, impotence and chaos in minds. Hells exist, of course, but if we know this fact, we thereby know that it is not necessary to "go somewhere" in order to enter a "place of torment."

Nevertheless, it is now affirmed that no hell is "punishment" in the human sense of that word, and that is the only sense we can know. And it is above all affirmed that no hell can possibly be eternal. These statements are based on the following convictions:

Let us be convinced that no hell is "punishment" in the human sense. We punish violators of law because this seems at present the best we can do. We have neither wisdom nor power sufficient to provide only for reformation through suffering in our treatment of such violators, and we thus punish in order to protect ourselves, or to vent our anger, or to gratify an idea of justice, whether or no reform may or can ensue.

But the Universe is operated according to the law of reason, and this law works in the interest of highest self-completeness in its highest object, person. If reason is in the Universe, reason provides from the beginning and throughout all worlds for consequences of violation of law that shall tend toward this highest goal. In person-life the consequences of violation of law necessarily tend toward reformation. The tendency may be resisted, but it is the outworking of the law of reason, nevertheless.

If the Universe is the Thought of an Infinite Thinker, the latter requires no "punishment" in the human sense for his own sake. Neither an endless nor a short-term hell can be of value to an infinitely wise Being unlimited in power of influence and attraction. The goal of the Universe is self-completeness in all its

inhabitants, and this goal can be served by *consequences of violation of law* in a System, all the laws of which are universal and uniform, without a trace of actual punishment.

It is simply necessary that an Infinite should think into being a System which shall operate according to the law of reason, that is, in such a way that consequence in violation of laws shall work, sooner of later, reformation in the violator — to obviate all demand for punishment.

This working must tend at last to displace the causes of hell: ignorance by *knowledge*, fear by *courage* and *hope*, weakness by *power*, disharmony by *harmony*, among personal functions and with the Universe itself.

I do not admit that any intelligence can become so lost to self-interest as to get beyond learning;— that any person-self can get out of reach of the influence of the Infinite.

We substitute in our thought a reasonable "within"-hell of reformative consequences for an irrational hell of hopeless "punishment."

The second propositions, no hell can be eternal, bases on certain conceptions concerning the Infinite.

We have said that some responsibility rests with the Infinite to justify creating a Universe in which evil and suffering must inevitably occur. In this statement we are simply doing the best we can with the minds we have. No man knows adequately in this matter; yet we are compelled to assume that an Infinite Thinker that is reasonably (not to say, infinitely) benevolent, would not bring into existence a race of beings who must be ignorant and weak at the start, and must be capable of self-destructive activities because capable of conservative, and must, therefore

learn the right way of living by experience,— without knowledge in that Infinite's mind of a final outcome of universal harmony, and without adequate provision by that Infinite in the nature of that Universe for reformation through consequences of the violation of laws. A Universe constructed on the law of reason and for the final goal of self-completeness must contain within itself absolutely ample provision for this outcome.

The only possible way in which hells may be eliminated from the Universe is to provide that they may be outgrown.

All the old conceptions of hell are unworthy the dignity of an Infinite Thinker. The "within"-hell of broken law whose *reason-to-be* is reformation unto the "within"-heaven, is worthy the dignity and wisdom of the best Deity we can conceive. Other hells represent bad gods. It was the Hell of the Dark Ages that made the God of the Dark Ages. The wonder was that men did not forget the true God and worship the Devil.

An eternal suffering hell is an impossible fiction. Hell will last so long as the "within"-consequences are required for reformation, but no created being could possibly hold pain's hell forever, since ignorance, fear, weakness, disharmony are essentially destructive of person-self, and there must come a time in their operation when their "victim" shall have been annihilated.

The only method by which a human spirit can be made immortal in hell in spite of the destructive working of hell's essentials, is by special intervention of the Infinite Thinker to give the person-self which is hell renewed power to continue existence. The psychic factor in person cannot go on forever committing suicide. To make the Immanence of the Infinite Thinker

an eternal support of person-self in order that it may continue to be a "within"-hell — this is to charge the Deity with being worse than has been conceived for the Supreme Devil of the Middle Ages. No one has thought Satan malignant enough to uphold in existence forever the inhabitants of hell; it has been sufficient to suppose him the eternal torturer — never the eternal upholder for torture.

The evil causes of evil character cannot eat forever into a human soul. There must come a time when it is all evil — unless something occurs to prevent this outcome. But moral evil is destructive of the person-self, and the process of moral decay must reach a stage of extinction — unless a divine fiat prevents the end.

We can possibly imagine an infinite Devil engaged forever in injecting life into his victims in order that they may everlastingly suffer, but we cannot conceive an Infinite Thinker capable of evolving the present Universe engaged in that useless task. The old thought made Deity an absolute Ruler *in absentia*,— from afar, — and such a Sovereign was capable of the work suggested, or was not inconsistent with the notion of a Universe once made and "running itself" without the present support by Thought of the Creator; but we do not find it possible to-day to see how any object can exist — save those "hells" which man makes within himself — apart from the Infinite Thinker who upholds all things by being in them, as a man's self is in every function of his body; and so, we find it equally impossible to see how an eternal "Hell" can exist save as the Infinite sustains in being souls that are themselves "hell." We chloroform our suffering animals. The kind of Deity that hides back of eternal hell is an infinite devil.

Hell-Fears Obviated by Life.

The remedy for the fears before us seems very plain. In harmony with what I have said in the preceding chapter relative to the search for truth and right and the suggestions given in the present chapter in regard to character and motive, it is only necessary to add certain considerations pertaining to truth and right which tend to throw each one of us on his own responsibility and to develop within us splendid courage as well.

If we conceive of the Universe as composed of visible and invisible worlds, and if we suppose as possible communications between seen and unseen intelligences, our only ground for fear of such intelligences — and so of any states called "hell"—is surely to be found in ourselves alone. It is altogether superstitious to believe that "evil spirits" possess any power to control natural laws and forces for human injury, for such "spirits" do not exist on the material plane, on which plane such control must obtain, and the law of reason which the Universe expresses forbids destructive external interference with any system which the good of the whole does not finally call for. The interference of "evil intelligences" cannot conserve the final universal completeness save as each individual possesses within himself the power to repel and overcome such interference. Neither seen nor unseen beings can manipulate the natural forces in other than natural ways. We have, then, to contend with unseen malevolent intelligences, assuming such to exist, precisely as we have to contend with visible beings of the same character. For both classes we need *two weapons* only — as already indicated: *practical wisdom and moral character*. In this book we have learned how to obviate fear-feeling in regard to human beings so far as con-

cerns their use of natural forces. So far as concerns the invisible psychic forces also (which are natural in the widest sense), we have concluded that all occult suggestion has to become thought and feeling within us before it can exert influence over us. If, then, our motives and habits of thought and conduct all signify harmony among our own powers and with the laws of the worlds about us, we know that "evil" suggestions will be recognized, and, being recognized, will be rejected by the better self.

Preëminently do these pages teach that the goal of human existence must be personal completeness. This involves each one of us, and therefore all. Thus, life is seen to be mutual. One can only come to completeness by harmonizing with the idea of completeness in all. Harmony in this mutual sense becomes, now, the basis of welfare. This state of harmony is realized by so much as we seek to know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and therefore seek to know and do the right — that which conserves the highest selfhood. When such a state of harmony is one's goal, all ground for fear-feeling concerning "hell" disappears of necessity, and perfect ground for wisdom relating to the preservation of harmony and the truest self-interest becomes the most evident thing in the world.

Moreover, since the *right kind* of Deity approves and rewards the search for truth and right, and certainly dwells within the searcher himself, if we are creating a God that befits us, we know that the laws of the Universe, when rightly utilized by us in thought and conduct, will "work together for good"— absolutely without fail.

But, now, if *truth* is merely what a man honestly thinks, it may seem that the standard of right think-

ing is very uncertain. The suggestion must be conceded, but it makes for no fear. The *standard of right thinking is most wonderfully uncertain.* The days of rigid absolute standards in this regard have passed away, because we know that the individual self is the only authority that can be binding on that self. Our *truth is all and always relative.* But it is relative to *each* of us, not to some of us, and the standard of truth to each is the *best truth that each can make out for himself.* It is impossible to come to any so-called "loftier" or "surer" conclusion. What is the authority to decide this best truth for each? The *best known self* of each. The best self must discover the best truth for that self. This best truth has just two tests: the welfare of self in the long run, tested by experience, and the welfare of all, tested by universal experience. Your best self calls upon you to seek that which shall be truth to you because it works well with you, year after year, and would, as you believe, work well as universal law.

And if *right* be merely what a man thinks, the standard, it must again be admitted, is also very uncertain. But right always has been uncertain. This is no new thing. What is right for one man is wrong for another man. We discover some traits in Moses — apparently approved by Jehovah — which his defenders could not tolerate in themselves. This difference of standard may have various legitimate personal explanations, but there is one explanation which we often overlook — *variations in the desire to know what the right really is.* If a thing is right to me merely because I take up with the first chance appearance of right, or because I rather prefer it to be that way, in harmony with a superficial *notion* of self-interest, that

so-called "right" has no value whatever. It is simply an excuse. Not what a man happens to think right *is* right for him. The true right for each of us is what we "know" to be right after we have done our best to find the right. The true right is defined only by reasonably strenuous sincerity. This is right to the man *now*. And that is enough. The right may change to-morrow, and it probably will to the earnest seeker, for that kind of man goes right on with his search, always and unweariedly; but if the thought of right is *conviction* wrought by persistent effort to get at the actual right thing for the man himself at the time, the new right will still be the right for such a person. The whole Universe is set to build this sort of man and to make for him kingdoms vast and wondrous.

These paragraphs remind us, again, of the law: *We ought to be altogether as determined to know the truth and the right as we instinctively feel we ought to be determined to live truth and right once we believe we have discovered them.*

This desire to know as well as to do that which conserves the self and all other selves, constitutes the core of harmony. In such a state of harmony, fear of devils and hells dies as surely as disease perishes when discord ceases.

The Regimes of High Courage.

Avoiding, now, all suggestions of a professionally religious character, and assuming that our preceding chapters have prepared the way for work based on the very nature of man, you are invited to adopt the following talismanic affirmations as inspirational and guiding principles for life:

First Regime of High Courage: *Positive Self-*

Assertion. You are invited to acquire the habit of affirming, until the affirmation develops the corresponding attitude:

"I am a positive, fearless spirit, having all the rights of a free-born citizen of the Universe."

Second Regime of High Courage: *Assumption of Deific Nature.* By way of rationalizing the preceding affirmation, you are invited to repeat daily for many months the declaration below, and in all conduct and thought seek to demonstrate the same:

"I am a manifest of — I possess the essential nature of — the Infinite Self, sovereign in my own sphere, deathless amid all worlds, creative of endlessly growing personal power."

Third Regime of High Courage: *Claiming the Universe as Home.* In positive self-assertion and on the assumption of kinship with the Infinite, you are invited to make this thought a Dynamic Idea underlying your whole mentality:

"I am, of right, at home in the Universe around me, and I freely demand, appropriate and use all its beauty, wealth and power required in my personal unfoldment."

Fourth Regime of High Courage: *Classing the Self as Befits the Self.* You are invited, for the reasons above suggested, to think of yourself as a member of a high circle of existence and to demand as your right all the emoluments and privileges properly pertaining thereto. To this end, every day should see you making the claim:

"I belong to the high-class circle of honor and good will to all, and I therefore call for and am now receiving the influence and assistance of men and women of this class throughout the world."

Fifth Regime of High Courage: *Repelling all*

Evil. Since each affirmation and claim above named is true and indefeasible, you are invited to hold, without reservation or hesitation, steadfastly to this position:

"*I am now immune to any injury from any source whatsoever, because, against all error, all evil and all malign "spirits" and forces* I CLOSE *every avenue and door of approach to my sovereign self, physical, mental, conscious, and subconscious,* in toto.

SIXTH REGIME OF HIGH COURAGE: *Appropriating the Joy of Courage.* You are invited to make the following all-powerful faith the finishing completion of the work of these regimes:

"*I am wholly and dynamically the spirit of Courage, and I breathe the air of Courage, and I drink the water of Courage, and I am charged and electrified with the Joy of Courage — for body, for mind, for to-day, for to-morrow, for this world, for all worlds, for a career perfectly in keeping with a human at home in a boundless Universe* PLACED AT MY DISPOSAL FOR WELFARE."

The above regimes are brief indeed in comparison with the topics involved, and should receive much greater attention than a mere reading. You are invited to commit to memory the italicized parts and to affirm them mentally for long, until the inspiration which they surely will develop becomes permanently conscious in all your life.

And now, be it remembered, the motive of these last chapters has never for a moment been destructive. If some things religious — or, rather, theological — have here been treated with candor, the end sought has been always superior thoughts and the courage of reason.

Miscellaneous Poems, Essays, Etc.

Sir Anyman

Oh, Life's perennial Knight — Sir Anyman,
Trust thou nor Opportunity nor Fate:
The one, a mere detail in Nature's Plan,
The other, Error's name for Best Estate.
Complainer! Know'st thou not the oath, I Can,
Shall win brave kingdoms to thy will elate
If Good Soul do but scorn their wizard ban?
On thee, the Master, see! they fawn and wait!

I sing no Law of Accident or Birth,
No Gift of Fortune by Divine Decree.
I sing the Call of Courage, Honor, Worth!
The world-wide Call of our old Mother, Earth.
Heed thou, Sir Knight, this Golden Prophecy:
The Throne to him who forces Destiny!

FRANK CHANNING HADDOCK.

GOLDEN POWER

A Study in the Six Supreme
Values of Existence

SUPREME VALUES

Life

Action

Thought

Harmony

Growth

Mastery

I am evolving within these Supreme Values

LIFE

is the Substance of Reality. All Things needed for Endless Unfoldment it draws forth from itself as a Center Universal. You are such a Center.

I Demand to possess now Fulness of Life.

ACTION

is Life's Effort always to realize the More of Itself. Assume that More as yours — that Action as subject always to your Demand.

I Demand to unfold today the More of my Self.

THOUGHT

is intelligent Life's self-initiated Action for fulness of being. Here lies Power — dreaming the Ideal, creating the Real. Make your thought always positive — (self-building), and repel every negative (self-hurting) Idea.

I Demand that all my thought build power in me.

HARMONY

ordains power. You constitute Harmony when you are and do whatever your Real Nature calls for at any moment of your life.

I Demand to be the Harmony of my real nature.

GROWTH

is the formation of New Habits for Perfection of Life. It is governed solely by the Law of Harmony. Follow this, and fear not Growth in any function of your being.

I Demand to grow by ever new achievements.

MASTERY

This Value is not coercion of self; rather, is it free action of Life in any manner felt at the time to mean Harmony. You are invited never to repress the discordant self; always to express the self of Harmony. Now this climaxes all Supreme Values.

I Demand the Mastery of the Self of Harmony.

ALL THE POWER

You will ever possess
You already have within

Live it by Thought and Action

Grow Young Along With Me

(A study in the spirit
of perpetual Youth)

Grow Young Along With Me

I

Grow young along with me;
Heed not the ancient tyranny
Of Faiths that feed on fear and own death's sway.
Time is for dust, not soul;
Not death, but life is spirit's goal,
And youth holds spirit's life an endless day.

II

What God is this who wills
The years shall measure growing ills,
The last compel decay, the broken mind?
Rather, that God be ours
Who giveth life immortal powers,
With youth the goal to be, and death behind.

III

Existence comes to best
In qualities that give it zest,
In intuitions swift and passions bold.
And these are youth's, at worst —
Wines of all years expressing first
That man may drink and know, and ne'er grow old.

IV

Poor wisdom to conceive
Experience alone may weave
Fine tapestry of mind, of heart, rare lace.
How work the gods in men —
With chisel, brush, or score or pen —
Ere school of years might claim to give them grace?

V

And must experience mean
Defeat and pain — the builder's lien
Exactly to the full in coin of age,
And not the nobler store
Of youth's perfections brought to more,
And joy of these possessed, our finest wage?

VI

But "bodies die," forsooth,
"And souls fare forth, in age or youth?
Past, present rules? So runs the law of time?"
Well said! Must all go wrong
Since none has sung right's perfect song?
Means nothing more man's long historic climb?

VII

Know this: all being's one,
In man or angel, star or sun:
The forming crystal of unfolding thought.
Pierce that with eye of seer:
You know the crystal's coming clear
Of death, as diamond of matrix caught.

VIII

Not natural is death:
How fails within the living breath
Untouched by accident, by alien force?
Shall goodness self destroy?
Hides breeding pain in flawless joy?
So, then, must life pursue an endless course.

IX

Your wizard, loving plants
Whom Nature's inefficient grants
Condemn to poverty of growth and bloom,
Conjures with plastic cells
Wherein some unseen power dwells,
And, like a God, revokes the ancient doom.

X

And there's my argument:
In yesterday's poor accident
Transformed to first intention realized:
Life's failures turned about,
So, death's grim forces put to rout,
And immortality on earth emprised.

XI

Ev'n thus life's bloom shall lift
Diviner and diviner gift
Of fragrant fruit of mind and wine of heart,
Responsive to His hand
Who thus His work has willed and planned,
That flesh with soul may prove the Master's art.

XII

And youth runs well the road
Whereon this Hope has ever glowed,—
Whereon, afar, the Fact shall reign supreme,—
Till Faith, in guise of friend,
Decrees for all one common end,
Inviting death to slay the heavenly dream.

XIII

Youth only may acquire
Power to hold the Quenchless Fire
Within its glorious heart, its daring brain.
And when the world grows young
New Man shall stand the gods among,
Forever victor over death and pain.

XIV

For life, be well assured,
Is just perennial hope allured
By joy and courage, and bright dreams, and love;
By all achievements high,
And the brave magic, "Power Am I,"
And cloud-built thrones that rule the worlds above.

XV

These gifts all else eclipse;
And these first issue from His lips
Whose Breath forever tides on being's coast.
But these are youth — no less:
And each in other must express,
Since he who most is young, proves all, lives most.

XVI

Grow young along with me: win back
Along the shining, unwilled track
Where run the deathless gods, our earliest friends.
Youth's primal wisdom know,
And wisdom's Golden Power grow
To live the life that is, that never ends.

Creed of the Four-Fold Life

I

I believe in God the All-Good, whose Thoughts are worlds without evil, and whose "Image" is natural man.

II

I believe in the Eternal Revelation of Truth, and in Jesus Christ the embodiment of Ideal Humanity and the Infinite Life.

III

I believe in the Infinite Fatherhood, in the Living Kingdoms of the Seen and the Unseen, and in the Brotherhood and Communion of all Spiritual Existences.

IV

I believe in the Immortality of the Human Spirit through conscious possession of the Infinite Life.

V

I believe in Unrestricted Freedom of Thought, in the Sovereign Power of Mind over Matter through physical science and spiritual laws, and in the final extinction throughout our Universe of the twin aliens and usurpers, Disease and Death.

VI

I believe in the Immunity of the Human Spirit to any evil not self-induced.

VII

I believe in the Right of every human being to the Four-Fold Life: HEALTH, PROSPERITY, UNFOLDMENT, SPIRITUAL POWER and in the right use of all good means thereto, human or Divine.

VIII

I believe in the Law of Harmony with the Infinite as sole and absolute guaranty of the Four-Fold Life.

IX

I believe practically for myself in the White Life, the Kind Heart, the Unruffled Spirit, the Open Mind, and the Divine Assistance.

X

I believe in the evolution and ultimate perfection of the Spiritual Universe.

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO MEN AND WOMEN OF ALL RANKS WHO DESIRE A LARGER LIFE AND GREATER PRACTICAL SUCCESS

THE material theory of life at last succumbs to that Ideal Conception which makes all worlds and all beings particular manifests of one Universal Mind. (But individual man is the architect of a free destiny.)

The Universe is a Living Thing. The essence of matter is life. The so-called inorganic lives and dies — as the organic lives and dies; — each in its own sphere and way.

A mass of matter is a given number of molecules, a molecule is a certain number of atoms, an atom is an assemblage of corpuscles (or electrons) surrounded by "positive electricity," and a corpuscle is a unit of "negative electricity." The corpuscle is a state of the universal medium of heat, light, etc., called the Ether. "Positive electricity" is an essentially unexplained state of the ether. "Negative electricity" is a certain state of the ether assumed for scientific explanation of phenomena. Experiments justify the assumption. There are about seventy-eight kinds of atoms and there are thousands of kinds of compounds. But the corpuscles are all alike in nature and size. Differences of matter are due to differences of arrangement of corpuscles in atoms and of atoms in molecules. The corpuscles are negatively electrified particles. The elec-

trified particles are modes of etheric motion. They make the atom, and the atom "is a particular form of motion of the ether in the ether, in the same sense as what is called light is a form of motion of the ether in the ether."

The ether is the unseen universal medium through which are manifested all the forms of force such as light, electricity, magnetism, gravitation, etc. All material things, from sand-grain to the material Universe, "lie not only encompassed by it, but soaking in it as a sponge lies soaked in water. How much we ourselves are matter and how much ether, is a moot question."

But the ether? Avoiding a metaphysical as well as a scientific discussion, which occasion and space-limit here forbid, the Power-Book Library holds that matter and force are one thing in differing mutual manifestation, and that this one thing is an expression of Universal Mind. If the ether is matter, it is an expression of Universal Mind. If the ether is other than matter, it is equally an expression of Mind. As we ourselves are mind-stuff, it is good thinking to hold that the Universe about us is Mind-Stuff. As it acts, it is an agent. As it evolves, it lives. As its acts and evolution make for development, it is Mind. As it is Living Mind, it is personal. As the sum-total of its evolution is conservative of its best, it is kindly disposed toward all its unitary personalities.

The Universal Ether manifests itself in various physical forces, and the Universal Mind exhibits in various Goods — facts, truths, laws, beauties, reason, values, happiness, power. These Goods are not inert properties or conditions. They are psychic forces. Such forces, and the material, we call the Universal

Forces. The Universal Forces have built up and are building the Universe of matter and mind. As the process is, on the whole, conservative, they are kindly disposed toward every human personality. They constitute four gifts offered to each individual person: Field for development, Means of development, and Master and Servant. They make one great demand in exchange for their values: Discovery of law and Obedience thereto. Ignorance and disobedience they "punish," thus teaching. Knowledge and obedience they reward, thus inspiring. The end of the activity of the Universal Forces is a perfected Universe. They now seek the highest welfare of every individual for the sake of that far-off goal. They are at your disposal.

The human personality, material and psychic, is a certain dual unit of mind which is distinguished from all other units by what we call consciousness and by the contents of consciousness. The human personality is, as such a unit, immersed in the Universal Mind, as the atom is immersed in the ether. The human personality is so immersed in Mind's universal expression, the Universal Forces. It is, again, immersed in and saturated by the Universal Ether.

But it is not mere "clay." The individual *believes* himself to have the power called Will. Beyond doubt he *knows* that the development of his unitary life *certainly depends* on the right use of that power. Obedience to law is the realization of the Universal Forces. The right use of self is the use that harmonizes with the Universal Mind, or the Universal Forces, and the Universal Ether.

The Supreme Law of all Laws is the Law of Har-

mony. To find the method of harmony and to rightly adjust the developing Will to the Universe in which man lives is the Demand of all Demands on the human individual.

That demand is fulfilled, not by "meditation," but alone by practical living. The discovery and the adjustment above referred to unfold the personality and assure the individual all the success he is endowed for. He needs no more.

The two efforts thus indicated resolve themselves into one thing: *The Right Use of the Right Self.* How best to handle the best self — on this question hinges squarely power and success. The practical answer to this question involves — the Subjective Self, the Objective Self, and the Personal "Faculties." Culture of the "faculties" through acquisition of knowledge is the work of schools and colleges.

The Power-Book Library does not substitute for that work, but it seeks, through culture of the "faculties" brought into direct exercise, and by means of the great principles and laws of experience, to unfold and train the *personality as an instrument of the Will,* so that the Universal Forces of life may be practically utilized for development, happiness, power and success.

The particular means to this end are Will-Power, Mind-Power, Magnetism and Practical Ability. The Library stands for Direct Personal Culture of these Four Fundamentals. Through practice of its methods and the use of its principles, they become actual factors in the student's life.

Comrades

A SEA POEM

By Frank Channing Haddock

Comrades

Onward, and ever onward, through the changing seas,
They sailed with hearts courageous and the dream of ease
In comradeship elect. And always did the dream
With deep distress and hope deferred o'er burdened seem,
Yet always sweet for endless longings and forepictured ways
Where Faith might give them harbor on some perfect Day of days.

Only once did they meet, bound shortly out, and hail and part,
Each separate course swung far and wide by wind and wave and chart.

At times the restless waters and head winds ran high,
With tides and currents hostile to the will's desire;
At times came signs portentous from the racing sky,
Came threats and dangers from the deep and heaven's ire;
At times the great Galactic Circle's glittering fire
Vied with the morning's sapphire splendor to inspire
The voyagers with thoughts sublime
O'er measuring the sweep of time
And the sweet feelings which, to minds, are truth,
To hearts the elixir of eternal youth.

For thoughts are strong, and stronger still the long-
ings deep
That ever at the soul of things their vigils keep
For that the World's vast Power and its Law may
reap
Fulfillment absolute throughout their boundless sweep
There is an influence that more insistent calls
Than voice of ocean or perpetual waterfalls;
That finds unerringly the objects of its quest
As stars do find their images where waters sleep,
Or sunlight finds its rainbow tints where fountains
leap
It issues from the tempest's ruck, and from the moon-
lit vault,
From clear-away horizons and from days that have
no fault.
It whispers to the saddened heart and to the mind
unfilled,
For that the Power and its Law may have their way
as willed,
And ever shall it seek and find till hearts and minds
are stilled.

For long they sailed the one huge sea, yet each alone,
Their winged boats far separate by the uncertain
miles.
For long did isolation round them make its moan
And melancholy lure them with deceitful wilds,
Till weary seasons on through weary years had flown,
And the long log of leagues to weary lengths had
grown.
Then came they, slowly, dimly, to expect an hour
When the great deep should blossom like some sud-
den flower,

And each should know forever life's diviner power.
And always as they voyaged now their winged boats were blown
A little nearer, keel toward keel, and toward the zone
Of summer lands, and singing seas, and happy isles
Where the great sun-god daily from his throne-room smiles.

Then came the wondrous influence good sailors know and love,
And all the seas went golden from the golden clouds above.
It touched the vast with mystery, with mystery the air,
And filled the heart of mystery with thoughts the blessed share.
Once more the sailors twain did meet, long outward bound, and hail,
With many a sign of mind and heart called on the favoring gale.
Borne onward by that gracious Breath whose wisdom can not fail,
With gold around the rippling keels and gold on every sail,
They drew alongside, friendly near, and shaped their course away,
Bound now through weather fair or foul, whatever might prevail,
Toward crystal bays elysian in the land of perfect days.

And as they sailed each called to other thoughts that seemed

Sweet echoes of the things aforetime each had
dreamed.

Dear are the memories that throng us now:
Of fogs deceitful, and, aloft, strange sights;
Of tempests fierce and breakers at the bow;
Of weary vigils through the weary nights;
Of fickle glory on the expectant brow;
Of all dead sorrows and forespent delights
On all the waters where our boats did plow.
These memories swim
Round and round in movements dim
About one visioned voyage sweet beyond the sea's
vast brim.

The infant sleeps upon a gentle tide,
A heaven of love above it and of pride.
Youth mimics sailing with a mimic boat
Upon a wayside ocean, deep and wide.
Then, launching forth upon the sterner brine,
With thoughts assured of seamanship applied,
In confidence sublime, in faith divine,
Sails gallantly away to win the prize
The gods may grant from lands, or seas, or skies.

What mean these things that float up from below,
A moment glimpsed while swelling tides are calm,
With carvings of the lotus and the palm,
And speaking of an ancient pomp and show
O'erwhelmed by time's dread billows long ago,
Of battles fierce, and of processions slow,
Of mystic rites, and spices that embalm?
Did we once sail upon the Nile's wide flow,
And, meeting, life's diviner meanings know,
And sing to mighty Ra our reverent psalm?

Comrades

Idle this flotsam from the weltering main;
Idle the rigging's minor-keyed refrain;
Idle the wings that bring us questions vain!
Why drew we not alongside in the former years?
Why all these useless wanderings 'mid hopes and fears?
Behold, we sail together now as comrades twain,
And ever so shall sail till starry empires wane.

Praise to the gods! They also turn the struggling wheel,
To starboard, to larboard, and they know and feel
The power's mighty urging as their vessels plunge and reel
Upon the boundless ocean of their woe and weal.
And they lend us blind assistance, though their rage is sure,
And from sea to sea they call us, with a never-failing lure,
All the evils of good sailing like good sailors to endure.

Sail on, O Comrade Mariner! Fear not, and bravely sing!
Our course is shaped as one away, our boats are on the wing.

Praise to the Power above the gods our own to use at will
According to our living and the measure of our skill!
How can our voyage come to naught, and how our boats to wreck,
If that which rules the billows there rules here and walks the deck?

Comrades

All 'round us pass with canvas set,
The ships that sail from shore to shore,
The ships that sail forevermore.
Sails to starboard;
Sails to larboard;
Sails astern and sails ahead;
Bent on all quests that men have led,
For which man's heart hath throbbed, man's heart hath bled,
Since ever Hope upon the sea her bow of promise spread.
Yet seem these sails but ghostly things, or far or near,
Unreal and thin as shadows that in dreams appear.

The domed sky, a bell, doth dip,
Enclosing every phantom ship.
Why do the winds along their penons slip?
Why gleam the widening waters from each eager lip?
Only two actual sails there are upon this shining sea.
All others are but spirit forms etched on immensity.

Sweet are the bonds of comradeship that know but freedom's force!
Room yonder on the boundless deep for each self-chosen course!
Room here for every sail and spar a-swing upon the wind!
Way for the play, from deck to deck of each good captain's mind!
No conflict here of power or skill, no craftsmanship at war,
No clashing boats and tangled ropes, good sailors all abhor.

As friendly as are light and wave, as wave and
heaven's blue,
Through all the brew of weathers new our voyage we
pursue.

We gaze across this little separating space,
And in each other's eyes find ever truth and grace;
And on the piled and drifting clouds fond pictures
trace;
And weave sweet reveries on the seething billows'
lace;
And send our thoughts to seaward where the glitter-
ing whitecaps race.

Sail on, O Comrade Mariner, our voyage runs apace!
We yet shall find our anchorage, with captains face
to face!
We seek no shadowy way of death,
Bestrewn with wreckage, where the breath
Of blank despair swings to and fro
Upon a direful dirge of woe;
Even though this channel promiseth
The stormless waves and cloudless skies
Of the great deeps of Paradise.
Ill-told the ancient tale that saith
Joy comes alone on seas we do not know.
Behold, O Comrade Mariner, with living eyes,
There's where our harbor lies!
These racing billows soon shall dip and rise
Against the welcoming shore! Our harbor yonder
gleams,
The hope of all our sailing and the quest of all our
dreams!

The island groups that greeted them
Were like a wide and fringing hem,
Spangled with many a precious gem,
On some rich fabric woven for an Eastern prince.
Their beauty smiled upon the smiling sea,
Their beauty graced the harbor brilliantly.
And in their winding channels, deep and free,
The wavering waters shimmered with the opal's restless tints,
Beguiling fit things always toward the inner shore.
Pleasant it was to find safe anchorage
Where neither tempest fierce might rage,
Nor hostile wills around them wage
Their useless war; sweet to recite the journeys o'er,
And sweeter still to know that never, never more,
Might shifting tides of time or fickle winds of fate
Them separate.

The land that welcomed them was like a half-moon, inward curved,
And ran to seaward, on the right and on the left,
Ending in shining white cliffs lifted high and cleft
With chasms, purple-hazed or emerald-greened, as day's light served.
From shore-line inland rose the undulating slope
Till lost among the foothills. Mountain ranges clomb,
Tier after tier, and seemed to dare the daedal dome.
They saw the distant valleys and the canyons grope
Their way and disappear. They saw the glimmering glades
And meadows, set like gems against the darker shades
Of girdling forests spreading far as eye might roam.
They saw the mountain streamlets flecked with floating foam,

Flowing on to feed the winding river's silver band,
Which hurried ever singing toward its ocean home.
They saw wild birds, their music borne on breezes bland,
And fragrant flowers blossoming like stars on every hand.
Within the tide's calm depth, against the liquid heaven clear,
They saw all things reflected, great or small, and far or near:
The chasmed cliffs, the mountains scarred, the undulating land
O'erlaced with many waters, and the softly shimmering strand,
And mani-colored weeds and shells upon the wave-kissed sand.
Dear to them now was this great No-Man's continent,
Theirs by the right of that divine afflatus sent
To those who sail the high seas on high thoughts intent.

Most sweet the yellow air for all commingling notes
Or lapping waves, and vibrant wings, and songful throats;
Most sweet with fragrance of rare, spicy woods and blooms
Of waters still, and open leas, and gentle glooms
Of grateful groves. Most sweet the lightly stirring breeze
That rippled o'er the bay and murmured through the trees
In drowsy tune with the low lulling drone of bees.
And always seemed some spirit breath, they knew not whence it came,

To brush them and to thrill them with strange ecstasies,
Till hearts and minds were lost in fondest reveries.
And always burned a joy within each breast, the trembling flame
Of life effulgent and intense. And always grew
The wonder of it all, miraculous, yet true.
Brief, now, the long, long voyage of the years, and tame!
Brief, too, each day's long wanderings through the enchanted scene!
And bright the future, like the glory of the sheen
Of the great rose of morning flung afar across the bay.

A land of deep enchantments and sweet mysteries:
Here rules the Power above the gods with kindly sway,
Here never lure of hope slipped on beyond the reach,
Here came the gift ere wish had time to fashion speech.
They sat them down upon the upper, shelving beach
In sheer contentment, smiling on the new found world.
Behind them swept up to the guardian mountain peaks
All beauties of the land the hungry spirit seeks.
Before them rode their trusty boats, all canvas furled;
Yonder a white cliff flashed where sea-gulls poise and whirl,
Afar the islands and the blue seas brightly shone,
And overhead soft cloudlets slowly streamed and swirled
Across the azure of the heaven halcyon.

Then dreamily they whispered, Comrade, each to each,
Why should we journey on? Here will we always
stay.
This is our bay elysian in our land of perfect day!

THE END